

Yeltsin's victory
A nation divided
Facing up to a hostile parliament
Page 2

Diplomacy needed
Keeping the peace in former Soviet states
Page 14

Gatt talks
Haggling goes on to the end
Page 4

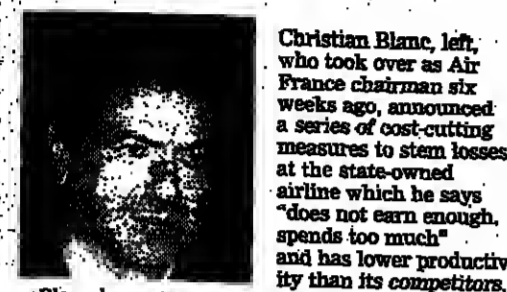


FINANCIAL TIMES

Europe's Business Newspaper

TUESDAY DECEMBER 14 1993

Air France chief outlines plans to stem losses



Christian Blanc, left, who took over as Air France chairman six weeks ago, announced a series of cost-cutting measures to stem losses at the state-owned airline which he says "does not earn enough, spends too much" and has lower productivity than its competitors.

Blanc has set a target of matching the performance of Lufthansa, its German rival, by 1997. In a statement to employees, Mr Blanc said Air France would report losses of about FF7.5bn (\$1.27bn) this year. Page 18; Kif sell-off, Page 18

Ex-minister admits illicit cash Italy's former Socialist justice minister, Claudio Martelli, admitted receiving 1,500m (\$900,000) from Carlo Sama, former managing director of Ferruzzi-Montedison, for the 1992 general elections. Page 3

GM clinches Polish venture General Motors, US carmaker, reached agreement to begin car assembly in Warsaw in a joint venture with FSO, Polish state-owned carmaker. Page 4

International Business Machines is to sell Federal Systems Company, a division providing computers systems and services, to Loral, US defence contractor, for \$1.68bn cash. Page 17

Plasma chief ousted Cedric Scroggs was removed as chief executive of Plasmac, troubled UK pharmaceuticals and scientific equipment group after a slide in its estimated profit this year from £200m (\$140m) to break-even. Page 17; Lex, Page 16; SmithKline Beecham drug approval, Page 25; Capital Markets, Page 21

Clinton attacks health costs President Bill Clinton warned it would prove impossible to cut social welfare spending without first attacking healthcare costs. Page 7

Northern League seeks allies Italy's populist Northern League, which performed well in recent local elections, is to work for a "liberal-democrat" alliance that includes media magnate Silvio Berlusconi. Page 16

Land-buying urged in Japan Public funds should be used to stimulate property market purchases, said Gaisuke Hayama, chairman of the Real Estate, Japan's top business federation. Page 6

EBB backed for big loans The European Union should turn first to the European Investment Bank for loans to fund heavy investment in transport, energy and telecommunications networks, finance ministers agreed. Page 16

UK nuclear decision 'in 48 hours' A decision to allow the Thorp nuclear reprocessing plant at Sellafield, northern England, to go ahead is expected to be announced within 48 hours. Legislators from Japan, the UK and US have been campaigning to block the go-ahead. Page 8

Hungarian banks rescued A \$1.4bn two-stage bailout for 10 commercial banks whose capital has been wiped out by loan losses was announced by the Hungarian government. Page 17

Tobacco ban review The European Commission is to re-examine its proposed ban on tobacco advertising, after EU health ministers failed to agree on the directive. Page 5

Chinese air safety call China's civil aviation chief has urged drastic measures to improve air safety after a spate of hijackings and three air crashes this year. Page 6

Divisions at top in N Korea North Korea's old guard affiliated to President Kim Il-sung, is involved in a power struggle with supporters of Kim Jong-il, his son and designated successor, say western analysts. Page 6

Bank's tough line on rates The Bank of England gave its clearest warning yet that Britain would raise interest rates if sharp price rises by companies threatened to push inflation through the top of its target range. Page 8; Bank shake-up planned, Page 8; Output prices steady, Page 8; Lex, Page 16

Win for Portuguese Socialists Portugal's opposition Socialists defeated the ruling Social Democrats in nationwide municipal elections. Page 3

Boy, 11, shot dead in S Africa White gunmen shot dead a black man and an 11-year-old boy west of Johannesburg.

STOCK MARKET INDICES			
FT-SE 100	3254.6	(-4.7)	
Yield	3.83		
FT-SE Euroshare 100	1416.03	(-0.42)	
FT-AI Share	1891.33	(-0.1%)	
Nikkei	17,327.33	(+0.99)	
New York headline			
Dow Jones Ind Ave	2737.88	(-2.79)	
S&P Composite	463.26	(-0.67)	
US LUNCHTIME RATES			
Federal Funds	7%		
3-mo Treas Bill	3.105%		
Long Term	10.0%		
Yield	8.22%		
LONDON MONEY			
3-mo interbank	5.75%	(nom)	
Life long gilt future	Dec 1151 (Dec 11'93)		
NORTH SEA OIL (Aargus)			
Brent 15-day Jan	\$13.40	(13.92)	
N Oil			
New York Crude	\$367.0	(363.9)	
London	\$366.4	(362.75)	

STERLING			
New York headline			
London	1.491		
DM	1.405	(1.405)	
DM	2.925	(2.94)	
FF	8.705	(8.679)	
SP	2.185	(2.177)	
Y	182.5	(183.25)	
Y Index	81.5	(81.8)	
DOLLAR			
New York headline			
DM	1.705		
FF	5.8335		
Y	1.4857		
Y Index	108.675		
London	1.705	(1.699)	
DM	5.833	(5.8175)	
FF	1.485	(1.458)	
Y	188.95	(188.15)	
Y Index	85.8	(86.7)	
Tokyo close	Y 108.04		

Newly independent Baltic states to hold summit on election after threat of reoccupation

Russian reformist parties fear neo-fascist landslide

By Leyla Boulton and John Lloyd in Moscow

Russia's reformist parties, shocked at the sweeping gains in Sunday's elections by the neo-fascist Liberal Democrats, begin talks today on forming an "anti-fascist front" to save reforms. Early results from Far Eastern regions and estimates from European Russia last night showed Mr Vladimir Zhirinovskiy's neo-fascist Liberal Democrats with a commanding lead. Mr Gaidar's Russia's Choice came third to the Liberal Democrats and the communists in some regions and second in others.

- The German parallel Page 2
- Bitter harvest page 15
- Editorial Comment Page 15

Though voting in European Russia may redress the balance somewhat, early indications of a surge in support for Mr Zhirinovskiy have been confirmed. Mr Yegor Gaidar, leader of the main reformist bloc Russia's Choice and the first deputy prime minister, said the "widest democratic coalition" was necessary "to influence changes in the government which must take place in the next few days". "It would be a danger to all of humanity if there was the slightest chance of this man (Zhirinovskiy) becoming president," he said, adding that even communists would be welcome to join a coalition.

He called for reforms to continue to stop the extremist bandwagon - and said he was "confident" the democrats could muster a majority in the new parliament, due to convene on January 11.

If he proves wrong, the pace of reform will rest entirely in the hands of President Boris Yeltsin, who is empowered by the new constitution to form the government and dissolve parliament if it disagrees with his choice.

Mr Gaidar's warning reverberated through former soviet republics, territory Mr Zhirinovskiy has threatened to occupy. The Baltic states announced they will hold a summit tomorrow to discuss the election result.

In Washington President Clinton said he was pleased at Russia's adoption of a new constitution and "not particularly surprised" at the strong showing of ultra-nationalists.

The German government congratulated "the Russian people and President Boris Yeltsin on the good result for the new constitution" although there was obvious concern over the big vote for both nationalists and communists.

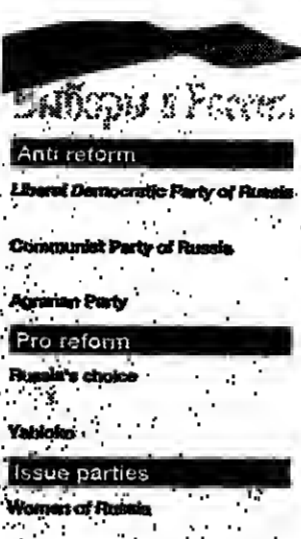
Mr Yeltsin, criticised by many reformists for refusing to support them because of his desire to remain above the electoral fray, ignored the criticism.

He greeted the adoption of the constitution as the basis for "our common hope in the resurrection of a great and strong Russia". He pledged that "as president I will stand strongly on the basis of the new constitution, so that, relying on your constitutional choice, I will do all I can to guarantee the irreversibility of the democratic processes, to put a constitutional barrier for all citizens against a reversal of your democratic choice".

Earlier, Mr Vyacheslav Kostikov, Mr Yeltsin's press secretary, had suggested that Mr Yeltsin was prepared to work with the Liberal Democrats - saying that they had a common interest in social protection, patriotism and the revival of Russia.

Mr Zhirinovskiy said: "If Yeltsin asks us to form a government, we are ready. If he asks us to join the government, take up two-three ministerial positions, we are ready. If he offers us nothing, we are ready to remain as the largest opposition party and help constructively".

He appeared anxious to moderate his previous hard-line positions - even to the extent of denying previous statements that he intended to re-possess Finland.



Russia's election: first results

Pro-reform parties are likely to gain as more results such as Moscow, St Petersburg and other large cities declare.

Party	% of vote
Anti-reform	
Liberal Democratic Party of Russia	24%
Communist Party of Russia	10%
Agrarian Party	9%
Pro-reform	
Russia's choice	13%
Issue parties	
The "Apple" coalition of market reformers led by economist Grigory Yavlinsky and friends - potential coalition partner for Russia's Choice	6%
The fight-for-your-rights party of Russia's over-worked and under-paid women, led by Svetlana Fedulova	7%



Vision of the future: Vladimir Zhirinovskiy anticipates poll success

Why democracy spells disaster in Serpukhov

By Edward Mortimer in Serpukhov

"If the whole country's voted like our town, the result will be a disaster," said Mr Alexander Kulakov gloomily.

It was Jan yesterday, Mr Kulakov, deputy mayor of Serpukhov, about 100km south-east of Moscow, was surveying the growing piles of ballot papers. His fellow citizens, it was by now clear, had voted in large numbers for the Liberal Democrat party of Mr Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, variously described as extreme nationalist or neo-fascist, and had put the Communist party in second place.

In the referendum on President Boris Yeltsin's proposed constitution the Yes and No votes were neck and neck.

Mr Kulakov, immaculate in brown

tie, yellow shirt and brown but non-matching jacket and trousers, said he had been a German teacher for 23 years before taking to municipal politics. Although not a member of any party, he proclaimed himself a supporter of Russia's Choice, the party backing Mr Yeltsin and advocating faster economic reform. At Serpukhov town hall, that seemed a lonely thing to be.

Serpukhov is in the heart of the belt of territory encircling Moscow that until last year was out of bounds to foreign visitors because many military bases and industries are sited there. Many inhabitants see themselves as having little to gain and much to lose from rapid political and economic change; and they had used the freedom of a new political system - multi-party

democracy - to make that clear. Yet the scrupulous fairness with which local officialdom had embraced that system was undeniable. Mr Kulakov also stood out in the town hall by being one of the very few males in sight. Presiding over the proceedings was the secretary of the municipality, Mrs Zinaida Yakimenko, who gravely accepted the "protocols" or returns brought in by the officials - also women - from polling stations.

One of the last sets to arrive came from the nearby Palace of Culture, carried proudly in procession across the square by Galia Shornikova, the secretary, and Tatiana Surikova, the president of that polling station, followed by colleagues carrying the actual ballot papers in sealed packages.

Why was this work seemingly a female monopoly? "Because men won't work for these wages," was the good-humoured reply. All involved in the count were employees of a single "construction" company, but became rather coy when asked what exactly it constructed. Mrs Shornikova gave her profession as "quality engineer", Mrs Surikova as "head of department".

Russians had voted in the referendum and in four different elections, only one of them (for half the seats in the state Duma or lower house of parliament) clearly pitting rival parties against each other. In the other three - for the regional assembly, the upper house or "federation council" and for the half of the Duma elected in single-member constituencies - few candidates were identified with parties on the ballot paper.

Candidates who did best in Serpukhov were people who had lived and worked in the area. Most of them either had no party affiliation known to those who were counting the votes, or were associated with quite different parties from the ones that did well in the vote for party lists.

One could perhaps qualify Mr Kulakov's remark if all of Russia voted like Serpukhov, the new parliament may be a disaster, but not because it is clearly dominated by one or two parties. On the contrary, it will contain many people with no clear party affiliation, but mandated to defend local interests. That should be a body wide open to presidential influence, if the president knows how to use it.

Gatt deal may hinge on US demands in audio-visual sector

By David Gardner in Brussels and David Dodwell in Geneva

Successful completion of the Uruguay Round of trade talks last night appeared to hinge on proposals taken to Brussels by Sir Leon Brittan, European Union trade commissioner, detailing US demands on access to Europe's television and film markets.

Sir Leon urged EU foreign ministers meeting in Brussels to endorse the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade deal. He said it offered unprecedented market openings and the prospect of fair competition in international trade. But he told ministers that the EU should resist the US demands on access to Europe's cinema and television markets.

"We almost had a solution to the audio-visual controversy" last night, but then they came back with new demands" on the instruction of President Bill Clinton, a senior German official said.

In Geneva, as negotiators awaited news from the EU foreign ministers' meeting, Mr Mickey Kantor, the US trade representative, refused to expand on the proposals he had presented to Sir Leon, nor of how the US

would respond if the EU rejected them. He remained adamant that settlement of the audio-visual issue was critical to successful completion of the round.

Although the audio-visual issue continued to block settlement of the round just two days ahead of the deadline, Gatt officials reported hectic progress in all other areas. Settlement of a row over US demands for changes to protect its anti-dumping laws provided an overnight impetus.

One official said that "the gavel had dropped" on almost 97 per cent of the Uruguay Round text. "We have achieved an extraordinary series of agreements in a very short period of time," said Mr Peter Sutherland, director-general of Gatt.

The US audio-visual proposals included calls for US programmes not to be restricted from prime-time viewing; for Europe's broadcast directive not to apply to new technologies; for Europe's royalties on blank tapes to be payable to US as well as European artists, but spent in Europe; and for no restrictions on video-on-request channels.

It was suggested that Sir Leon proposed to EU foreign ministers

Israeli and PLO leaders admit peace deal crisis

By Julian O'zanne in Jerusalem and Mark Nicholson in Cairo

Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation faced a potentially serious setback to their peace deal yesterday when they failed to implement the first stage of their agreement.

Both sides admitted they faced a crisis as Israeli troops remained in position in Gaza and Jericho, ignoring the first day of the timetable under which they are to withdraw by mid-April.

Israeli troops were due to begin pulling out of Gaza and Jericho yesterday under the peace accord signed in September.

Three Palestinians were killed in clashes with Israeli troops in Gaza yesterday, including one who attempted to drive an ambulance packed with explosives into an Israeli patrol.

Colonel Shukri Shichrur, deputy military commander of Gaza, said his troops were ready and waiting to withdraw from the strip and could do so within five weeks. However, Israel made not even a symbolic gesture yesterday to mark the start of the process.

Both sides conceded there were

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NEWS: THE RUSSIAN ELECTIONS

Zhirinovskiy one-man band in tune with past

Pre-war German parallels are striking, writes Chrystia Freeland

The remarkably strong showing of Mr Vladimir Zhirinovskiy's neo-fascist Liberal Democratic party yesterday prompted Mr Yegor Gaidar, architect of Russia's economic reforms, to make a historical comparison which is looming large in the minds of many frightened observers of the country's political scene.

In a domestic radio broadcast Mr Gaidar, who once dubbed Mr Zhirinovskiy a "little Hitler", drew parallels between Russia's tenuous political and economic climate and the situation in inter-war Germany which propelled the Nazis to power.

The similarities are certainly striking. Like Adolf Hitler, Mr Zhirinovskiy has benefited from his country's simultaneous collapse of political muscle abroad and living standards at home. And like the Nazis, Mr Zhirinovskiy's strictly hierarchical, well-organised party,

adept at producing rhetoric which appeals to many Russian people, has capitalised on the internecine quarrels among Russian democrats and their failure to woo tired voters with the promise of quick-fix solutions to Russia's woes.

The Liberal Democratic party is very much the creature of Mr Zhirinovskiy, its leader. Party enthusiasts sometimes go by the name of "Zhirinovskiy's eagles" and the main party broadsheets all bear their chief's name rather than the party's official title. None of the other members are prominent figures in their own right in Russian politics.

However, far from apologising for his organisation's focus on a single man, Mr Zhirinovskiy sees it as one of the secrets of his success. "A party

should have a single leader, with whom no one can quarrel. This is crucial to party discipline and to our strength," he said in a pre-poll interview.

Unlike the Communist party, which could draw on the extensive network still in place from the days when it ran the Soviet Union, or Russia's Choice, which was effectively the party of government, the Liberal Democrats have had to create a structure from scratch.

Building on the supporters Mr Zhirinovskiy first rallied to his side in his unsuccessful bid for the Russian presidency in 1991, the Liberal Democrats swiftly assembled an organisation which depended less on a strong network throughout Russia's regions than it did on their leader's charismatic message.

The Liberal Democrats' principle campaign weapons were highly emotive paid television advertisements and Mr Zhirinovskiy's extensive personal appearances at rallies throughout the country.

Party officials yesterday said they had spent Rbs1bn on the campaign which the party treasurer last week said had come from "God himself". He later explained that the funds were entirely based on small contributions of Rbs2,000 and Rbs3,000 each from individuals.

Mr Zhirinovskiy has benefited, in particular, from pockets of intense support in areas, such as the break-away Abkhazian region in Georgia, where ethnic Russians or small minority groups feel threatened by one of the newly independent post-Soviet states. In

places like these his promise to protect ethnic Russians everywhere is compelling.

The remarkable electoral success of the Liberal Democrats is likely to test how a political structure so closely tied to a single man - so effective on the campaign trail - will adapt to the more formal challenges of parliamentary politics.

In marked contrast to the outrageous statements Mr Zhirinovskiy issued with evident relish during the campaign, the morning after his unexpected victory was taking pains to position himself as a reasonable man, willing to work within Russia's existing political framework.

Best known for taking unashamedly extremist positions (he promised last week to

shoot the presidents of Russia's 5,000 commercial banks), Mr Zhirinovskiy is now portraying himself as the great conciliator who can weave a compromise out of the patchwork of Russia's political parties.

In this somewhat incongruous role as Russia's centrist forerunner, Mr Zhirinovskiy said that his party would be willing to form a government to serve under President Boris Yeltsin or to take up two or three ministerial posts within a coalition cabinet. Alternately, Mr Zhirinovskiy said his confoundingly named Liberal Democratic party would be willing to act as "a constructive opposition".

The soul of compromise, Mr Zhirinovskiy - who makes no effort to conceal his ambition to become president one day - said he would not oppose Mr

Yeltsin if he chose to postpone presidential elections until 1996, nor would his party object to Mr Viktor Chernomyrdin's continued tenure as prime minister. The only post the Liberal Democrats - are scoring between 20 and 26 per cent in projections of the election results - say they will insist upon is chairmanship of the lower house of parliament, the State Duma.

With Mr Yeltsin's chief spokesman yesterday telling Interfax that parts of Mr Zhirinovskiy's platform "quite correspond to the social aspects of the president's policies - that is the social policy of the state, patriotism, making Russian great", Russia's beleaguered democrats must now ask themselves who is more dangerous: the demagogic Zhirinovskiy of the campaign trail, or the victorious parliamentarian, extending a hand in co-operation.

Outlying regions boost nationalist party

By John Lloyd in Moscow

Early parliamentary election results from regions in Russia's far east yesterday showed a late surge for Mr Vladimir Zhirinovskiy's Liberal Democrats, pushing the party ahead in areas distant from power yet suffering the effects of economic reform.

In these regions, separated from Moscow by nine time zones, the nationalist LDP was running at more than double the strength of Russia's Choice - 25 per cent of votes cast as against 12.

The Communists were just behind at 11 per cent and the Agrarians, Yabluko and Women of Russia each at 7 to 8 per cent.

However, as results were coming in from further west, the vote for Russia's Choice and the rural Agrarian party was rising, at the expense of the Liberal Democrats and the Communists.

Results for the first 25 of the 89 regions suggested that the Liberal Democrats had won 24 per cent; Russia's Choice 12 per cent; the Communist party 10 per cent; and the Agrarian party 9 per cent.

Nationally, the results are likely to favour the pro-reformists further, because of the stronger support for reform in European Russia, where two-thirds of the population live.

Exit polls in both Moscow and St Petersburg, the largest cities in Russia, showed Russia's Choice was significantly ahead, though elsewhere Mr Zhirinovskiy was reported to be in the lead.

Mr Nikolai Ryabov, head of the Central Electoral Commission, yesterday refused to give a "general picture" of the voting patterns.

But he said that about half of the 13 blocs controlling for 225 seats in the lower house elected by party lists would not achieve the necessary 5 per cent qualifying total.

He said that "in a range of regions" the LDP was leading, while in "several" others it was in second or third place. The new parliament, he said, would show "a sufficiently wide spectrum of political forces".

The constitution, which required a 50 per cent turnout to be valid and a majority of those voting to be passed, scraped through the first of these barriers, and appeared to have attracted the support of 60 per cent of those voting.

However, in a significant number of regions and republics, the per cent barrier was not passed.

Though that has no significance for the passing of the constitution, it will be a future point of conflict with those areas which are claiming "sovereignty" under their own constitutions.

The "hot spots" will be the North Caucasian republic of Chechnya, where no voting was allowed; the Republic of Tatarstan, where only 13 per cent voted and where no members were elected to the upper house of the parliament; and the region of Sverdlovsk, where Mr Eduard Rossel, the former governor, had attempted to change the region into the Urals Republic and where fewer than 50 per cent voted on the Russian constitution - though Mr Rossel was himself elected to the upper house.

Other important regions where a 50 per cent vote on the constitution was not achieved were the republics of Ingushetia, Udmurtia and Komi; the regions of Kemerovo, Khanty-Mansi, Chelyabinsk and Perm; and the autonomous district of Khanty-Mansi.

Voters reveal a weariness with politics

By Layla Boulton in Moscow

Lenin killed off Russia's last attempt at democracy when he sent sailors to dissolve the 1918 Constituent Assembly, saying the "guard is fired". In Sunday's election, it was the voters who told Russia's democratically-minded politicians of their weariness.

This, at least, is the message behind the crushing electoral victory of Mr Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, the neo-fascist leader who promises to restore Russia as a great power, to end crime and corruption among selfish officials, and to give every citizen of Russia guarantees of economic well-being.

Rather than an indication of Russians being a nation of arm-wagging extremists, the result is a snapshot of a sharply divided society with real grievances that need addressing, if not with deeds at least with words.

It shows a society split among the losers and winners of reforms conducted so far - or at least between those who have already lost faith in them and those who are still patiently awaiting their fruits.

Some of the new categories of society, such as entrepreneurs, are more clearly in a single camp than others.

But interviews with dozens of Mr Zhirinovskiy's supporters over the past few days show little support for his talk of invading neighbouring countries and reabsorbing former Soviet republics. Most frequently they express a longing

for law and order, panic over Russia's economic crisis, a feeling of national humiliation as a result of the Soviet Union's collapse, and a belief that their interests are not being pursued by officials.

They range from soldiers and simple-minded workers with low levels of education to educated professionals, such as engineers at defence enterprises, drawn by Mr Zhirinovskiy's promises to restore their previous importance to the economy.

One distinct constituency for Mr Zhirinovskiy's Liberal Democrats has been the military. Freed of the Communist era obligation to vote as their commanders told them, the army has been strongly attracted by Mr Zhirinovskiy's promises to make Russia great again and to give each homeless officer a flat.

For some of the more educated, supporting Mr Zhirinovskiy was a calculated protest vote against the ruling authorities. "I know Zhirinovskiy means war," says Mr Yuri Bolshakov, the courteous and educated chief designer at a major shipyard. "But only Zhirinovskiy will provide genuine opposition which Yeltsin needs."

Some, probably a minority, are motivated by a more distasteful chauvinism, like Vladimir, a prosperous waiter at St Petersburg's plush Astoria Hotel which caters mainly to even richer foreigners. He said he believed Mr Zhirinovskiy would restore Russians' pres-



Prisoners in a Moscow jail line up under the gaze of their guards to cast their votes in the weekend election

tige in their own country. Nikolai, a visiting officer in the Ukrainian army, even said he was happy about Mr Zhirinovskiy's success because it might mean Ukraine would be reabsorbed by Russia.

For the pro-reform elite, which once considered Mr Zhirinovskiy a joke or a nightmare, the result is a direct threat to their aspirations - but also a sign of the need to defend them better.

"It is no doubt a sign of people's lack of education that people believed in Zhirinovskiy's simplistic solutions,"

said Mr Mikhail Vinchel, a consultant who has invested in privatised Russian enterprises. "But at least now the democrats will have a powerful stimulus to unite."

Mr Andrei Chuguevsky, a Russian entrepreneur, said: "We get what we deserve as a society... Big reforms are always difficult, especially when they are conducted in the absence of political culture. This means that society can be manipulated however you like."

As Mr Anatoly Chubais, the deputy prime minister responsible for privatisation said: "We thought our work would speak for itself."

Not a single reformist leader held a television debate with Mr Zhirinovskiy to point out to voters the flaws in his arguments. Nor did TV journalists fill that gap. The result was that Mr Zhirinovskiy's assertions went totally unchallenged and he is now reaping the benefits of a brilliant campaign of systematic, consistent, clear, disciplined and ant-

tempting manipulation.

For a nation so professedly weary of politicians, the fact that so many people were sufficiently credulous to believe in Mr Zhirinovskiy's promises is also a sign of the heritage of seven decades of communism.

Mr Yuri Yudin, one of the defeated Russia's Choice candidates in St Petersburg, puts his finger on the reasons for this paradox: "We have been brought up to believe in things like Stalin, communism, and the party - but not to understand them."

Republics jolted by backing for expansionist

By Jill Barshay in Kiev and Chrystia Freeland in Moscow

Former Soviet republics reacted with concern yesterday to the strong support given by Russian voters to the neo-fascist leader, Mr Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, who has said Russia should occupy all the territories of the former USSR.

From Ukraine and the Baltic states on Russia's western flank to the Central Asia republics on the southern rim of the Russian Federation, republican leaders expressed their worries about Mr Zhirinovskiy's showing.

However, all tempered their fears

with hopes of a united, anti-fascist alliance of Russian democrats and a firm rejection of Russian expansionism by the western powers.

The toughest response came from the Baltic states, whose large ethnic Russian minorities make them particularly vulnerable to Mr Zhirinovskiy's pledge to defend Russians no matter where they live.

Leaders of the three Baltic states - Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia - plan to meet in Tallinn, the Estonian capital, to develop a common strategy on how to deal with Russia in the aftermath of the elections, a spokeswoman for the Latvian president said.

Adopting strong language laced

with references to inter-war Germany, Baltic leaders urged the west to take a firm stance in the face of the possible resurgence of Russian expansionism.

In Kiev, Mr Viktor Stelmakh, a spokesman for the Ukrainian president, said: "Zhirinovskiy's success does not portend well for Ukraine."

"In his election campaign, he used demagogic slogans about recreating the Russian Empire and made direct territorial claims on Ukraine."

Foreign ministry officials in Kiev said Mr Zhirinovskiy's electoral triumph would make the Ukrainian parliament less likely to give up the nuclear weapons stationed on its territory. Ukraine's failure to surrender

the weapons has become a source of mounting concern in the US and threatens to jeopardise the international nuclear non-proliferation treaty.

"Parliamentarians have said there will be no ratification of Start while there's a threat to Ukrainian independence," the Ukrainian official said. "Here's concrete proof of a threat from our neighbour. For them it is proof of why we should hold on to the weapons."

Officials from Kirghizia, which was caught up in a domestic political crisis that culminated yesterday with the ousting of the country's entire cabinet, said they were worried by the

Russian election results but would wait to see how the parliament shapes up.

Officials in Belarus, one of the most conservative of the former Soviet republics, also expressed concern while Georgian leaders took comfort in Russia's approval of a new constitution.

The Russian poll result coincided with Kazakhstan's formal accession to the nuclear non-proliferation treaty. The Kazakh parliament, which had already agreed to give up the portion of the former Soviet nuclear arsenal located on its territory, joined the accord in a session attended by visiting US Vice-President Al Gore.

West sees danger signs but puts on brave face

By Gillian Tett in London, Quentin Peel in Bonn and agencies

The German government yesterday put a brave face on the election results from Moscow, congratulating both "the Russian people and President Boris Yeltsin on the good result for the new constitution".

There was obvious concern, however, over the big vote for both Russian nationalists and communists, with Mr Klaus Kinkel, foreign minister, admitting the result was "surprising".

"It shows that people were exploiting both social protest and doubtless also the identity crisis in Russia after the collapse of the Soviet Union," Mr Kinkel said, reflecting an unease felt across western capitals at the poor performance of the reformist parties - a concern only partly tempered by relief at that Mr Yeltsin's constitution was adopted.

As the news of the scale of the nationalist and communist vote trickled in, Scandinavian countries became the first to voice their alarm. Mr Johan Hoegren Holst, Norwegian foreign minister and potential future secretary general of Nato, warned that the results were a "sign of danger" for many in Europe, with the progress of the nationalists "very frightening".

Mr Carl Bildt, Swedish prime minister, said the results were "disturbing", although he insisted that Russia's progress towards democracy was now "unstoppable".

Meanwhile, Mr Thomas Pickering, US ambassador to Moscow, warned the strong support given to Mr Vladimir Zhirinovskiy in the elections could provide a long-term political disruption to President Yeltsin, though the approval of his constitution had given Mr Yeltsin a "legal basis to move ahead". Mr Kinkel warned the result

could slow Nato expansion, and Nato officials were wary. Uncertainties about its relationship with Russia were a factor in its decision to slow the pace of Nato expansion, they said.

Finland and Japan, which have been the target of Mr Zhirinovskiy's territorial claims, carefully maintained a muted reaction. Far-right parties in France and Germany sent a message of congratulations to Mr Zhirinovskiy.

With Mr Zhirinovskiy's future role in any government still unclear, the hope in many diplomatic quarters is that the extremist statements made during his election campaign might be toned down in the aftermath of the election.

Meanwhile the international money markets and western business community in Moscow remained philosophical. Businesses already operating in Moscow were accustomed to considerable uncertainty, businessmen said.

Former satellites fearful of renewed imperialism

By Anthony Robinson, East Europe Editor

The strong showing of the neo-fascists, Communists and anti-western proponents of a new Russian Empire, backed by a powerful military, has sent a frisson of nervousness through the recently liberated states of central Europe and the Baltic region.

Only three months ago the Polish electorate felt sufficiently self-assured to vote back into power parties with their roots in the communist past. But foreign and defence ministers of the former Warsaw Pact states have since been urging the west to resist what they see as signs of resurgent Russian imperialism designs in central Asia and the Caucasus and the dangers of leaving an ill-defined "buffer zone" between Russia and Germany.

Mr Geza Jozsefszky, Hungarian foreign minister, has even spoken against what Budapest perceives as a western policy

of "appeasement" of Russia. He called on the Nato powers not to be conditioned by Moscow's restored hostility to any future extension of the Nato security umbrella to the Visegrad 4 states of central Europe.

Such fears were temporarily eased by President Boris Yeltsin's dissolution of the communist-era parliament and storming of the building. But they have re-emerged with the strong showing of anti-reform forces in the new Russian parliament and the approval of a constitution tailor-made for Mr Yeltsin but whose wide powers could conceivably be wielded in the future by Mr Vladimir Zhirinovskiy or others like him who emerged strengthened from the weekend poll.

Signs that the Russian military voted strongly in favour of Mr Zhirinovskiy and other communist/nationalist candidates are particularly disturbing for Latvia and Estonia, who received a pledge from the former government that the last

remaining former-Soviet troops would be withdrawn next year. However, Mr Slobodan Milosevic, the Serb leader, has been encouraged by the electoral success of like-minded men in Russia as he himself looks forward to elections next week-end. Sarhla is a text book example of what unbridled nationalism and an over-weening military can do to destroy prosperity and liberties.

The hope in central Europe last night, however, was that the final Russian election results would still permit the formation of a government dedicated to continuing the economic reforms required to create the prosperous social base needed to underpin democracy. But central European governments know better than most the difficulty of keeping reform on the tracks in the face of the high unemployment caused by cutting back the old militarised, socialist economy.

"Never shall anyone humiliate the Russians" (on his posters). "You will all be fine with me" (campaign slogan).

"I am waiting in the wings. My moment has nearly arrived." March 1993.

"You are going to defend Iraq, a victim of reckless aggression by America and Israel... You should know you should die for a noble cause... We will blow up a few Kuwaiti ports and aeroplanes plus a few American ships in the Gulf." Speech to armed volunteers he sent to defend his hero Saddam Hussein, January 1993.

"I would bomb the Japanese. I would sail our large navy around their small island and if they so much as checked I would nuke them... and we Russians haven't forgotten English treachery during the war. You are a small island, so you watch out too." January 1993, when asked by an English reporter what he wanted to do about the long running battle over the Kurile islands.

"Give me a billion dollars and I will become president of Russia." January 1993.

"Seventy or 80 per cent will vote for me in the next elections. Mr Yeltsin is not ready - he is afraid of the Russian people. I am not afraid. I am ready for the next election." May 1992, after last elections.

"If I don't rule, then no matter, let the military. In any case, they would be better than Yeltsin's democrats." December 1991.

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Ruhr plans a challenge for Disney

By Quentin Peel in Bonn

Mickey Mouse may be in trouble in the cultural fortress of France, but Bugs Bunny isn't bothered - he is planning to hit the ground running in neighbouring Germany, in the unlikely surroundings of the industrial Ruhr region.

Warner Brothers, the US entertainment arm of the Time-Warner media empire, and the Nixdorf family, who made their money from Germany's leading computer company, yesterday announced plans to open a D1850m (£138m) "film leisure park" and studio complex at Bottrop, once the heart of a thriving coal mining industry.

Now Bugs Bunny, Batman, and the Gremlins, not to mention the stars of Germany's biggest international war film spectacular, "The Boat", will seek to bring some good cheer - and jobs - back to the depressed industrial area.

The leisure park will be on a smaller scale than the troubled Euro Disney theme park outside Paris, but it still amounts to the biggest film industry investment ever undertaken in Germany, according to the delighted state government of North Rhine-Westphalia.

The idea is to combine both a leisure park, with roundabouts, shows and a funfair, with a studio complex for both film and television produc-

tions, on the lines of Warner Brothers' Movie World complex in Australia.

The venture is intended to provide 900 jobs in a region badly hit by the collapse of coal mining. Unemployment at Bottrop alone is some 12.3 per cent.

Mr Kurt Schmitz, mayor of the town, greeted yesterday's announcement of "provisional agreement" on the investment with enthusiasm.

The decision amounted to "one of the greatest financial commitments ever undertaken by an individual investor in Bottrop," he declared. "For the town of Bottrop, the Warner Brothers decision is particularly happy, because it means that the efforts of the community to carry on the process of economic, structural change have been given a new impetus."

It was all a matter, he said, of transforming an economy dependent on the primary industry of mining, into a blooming landscape of the tertiary sector - the leisure industry.

The North Rhine-Westphalia state government, battered by rounds of redundancies in the traditional coal mining and steel industries, has promised big subsidies to promote the project. Money will come from the state's mining industry development programme, according to Mr Günther Einert, economics minister.

Socialists get poll boost in Portugal

By Peter Wise in Lisbon

Portugal's opposition Socialists yesterday emerged clear victors from Sunday's nationwide municipal elections, inflicting a significant defeat over the ruling Social Democrats of Prime Minister Anibal Cavaco Silva.

Mr Antonio Guterres, the Socialist leader, said the victory would help establish his party as a viable alternative government.

But he reiterated his pre-election pledge that the Socialists would not call for an early dissolution of parliament based on the municipal results.

The Socialists increased their share of the vote to 36 per cent from 32 per cent previously.

The Social Democrats also increased their share of the vote from 31 per cent in 1989 to 34 per cent.

But Mr Cavaco Silva acknowledged that the party had fallen short of its main aim of wresting control of a majority of the country's 305 municipal councils from the Socialists.

Mr Jorge Sampaio, a Socialist, was re-elected mayor in Lisbon, at the head of a coalition with the hardline Communist party.

This was raised the prospect of a broader Socialist-Communist coalition, which President Mario Soares, a Socialist, is reported to favour.

The Communists polled 12 per cent of the total vote, the same result as in 1989.

During the campaign, Mr Cavaco Silva had said he was alarmed by indications that the president might call an early general election before the next scheduled ballot in October 1995, if the opposition gained a major victory. The Socialists dismissed the prime minister's concern as scare-mongering.

The Socialists strengthened their hold over Portugal's second city, Oporto, where they won with a majority of close to 60 per cent, and maintained control of several other major cities.

The Socialists dominated in industrial areas, whereas the Social Democrats fared best in rural regions.

The prime minister acknowledged that the results from Sunday's poll reflected mid-term dissatisfaction with the government, which is struggling to bring about economic recovery after an estimated 0.5 per cent decline in output this year.

Unemployment and labour unrest are also rising, and reform legislation has brought the government into conflict with doctors, teachers, students and other professional sectors.

Democratic past shaped Antall's vision of future

By Nicholas Denton in Budapest

Mr Jozsef Antall, the Hungarian prime minister who died of cancer on Sunday at the age of 61, was a man rooted in his country's history.

That is most trivially true in his training and earlier profession as an historian. More meaningfully, he drew strength from an abiding faith in Hungary's democratic traditions inherited in part from his father, a minister in the post-war government, who opposed both Nazis and communists.

His background led him to participate as a young man in the 1956 uprising against Soviet and communist rule. It made almost inevitable his entry into Hungary's political scene when democratisation began in the late 1980s.

In 1989 Mr Antall became leader of the centre-right Hungarian Democratic Forum and in 1990 won a conservative coalition to victory in free elections.

Mr Antall brought to the premiership impeccable credentials as a democrat of the old school. Politics was in his blood. The prime minister,

although not an inspiring leader, was a consummate politician: a master of the subtle manoeuvre and the political balancing act.

But Mr Antall took with him from his earlier career a tendency to lecture on Hungary's traditions and that opened him to the charge that he was not just old-fashioned but backward-looking.

Indeed he found it difficult to communicate with the post-communist, materialist Hungarian whose Holy Trinity, it was said, was car, video and weekend cottage. He was far happier meeting west German politicians and playing the statesman.

Nor was he ever comfortable with economic policymaking during a hectic period of free-market reforms. His response to the modern media's aggressive role was prickly at best.

But Mr Antall's historical orientation gave him surer bearings than most other post-communist politicians. As he said in his last national day speech: "Without a past there is no future."

Mr Antall's grounding in Hungary's democratic and western traditions gave him a

firm sense of direction during the transition from one-party to multi-party rule and from Warsaw Pact membership towards Nato and the European Union.

Above all, acute awareness of Hungary's 20th century trauma made Mr Antall prize stability. And stability, which seemed an unambitious goal at the euphoric start of the decade, looked a more impressive achievement over time.

Hungary's relative order helped the country attract half of all foreign investment into eastern Europe and distinguish itself from the turbulent states of the Balkans and the former Soviet Union. When Mr Antall died he was the longest serving leader in eastern Europe.

But Hungarians take most of these achievements for granted and the prime minister's popularity declined as sharply as Hungary's economic activity, which stands 20 per cent below the 1990 level.

Mr Antall, ever the historian, laboured under no illusions about electoral gratitude. He came to office calling his the "kamikaze government". He proved ready to sacrifice his own life, too.



Mr Jozsef Antall (left) pictured earlier this year with Mr Peter Boross, interior minister, who has been named interim premier

Coalition looks likely to govern Andorra

Andorra, the tiny principality wedged on the mountainous Franco-Spanish border, emerged yesterday from its first constitution-based election after more than 700 years of feudalism but found little changed, Renter reports from Andorra la Vella.

Though Sunday's poll produced no outright winner, the outgoing head of government,

Mr Oscar Ribas Reig, was confident the Pyrenean state could pursue reform with a coalition.

Eighty-five per cent of the population of 60,000 is foreign and was ineligible to vote under the new constitution.

Mr Ribas's centre-right Agrupament Nacional Democràtic won the largest share of the vote. It gained 28.4 per cent of valid votes in a turnout of 81

per cent, giving it eight seats in the 28-member Consell General de les Valls, Andorra's parliament. Unió Liberal with 22 per cent, and Nova Democràcia with 19.1 per cent gained five each. Coalició Nacional Andorrana (17.2) and Iniciativa Democràtica Nacional (15.3) shared the rest with Independents.

Mr Ribas, who had 17 supporters in the outgoing Consell, did not view the situation as a vote of no confidence in his government, comparing Andorra now to Spain in the transition when more than 20 parties contested the first election after General Franco's death in the mid-1970s.

Andorra is seeking to win international acceptance and modernise its anachronistic institutions. It joined the United Nations in August and has applied for membership of the Council of Europe. Key issues facing the new government include a deepening economic crisis. Mr Ribas said the budget deficit this year will reach Pt15.4bn (£76.3m) but so far no one has suggested introducing direct taxation as a remedy.

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Martelli admits receiving funds

By Robert Graham in Rome

Mr Claudio Martelli, former Socialist justice minister, yesterday admitted illicitly receiving £500m (\$300,480) from Mr Carlo Sama, the former managing director of Ferruzzi-Montedison, for Italy's general elections in 1992.

The admission came while Mr Martelli was giving evidence on the 15th day of the trial of Mr Sergio Cusani, an influential consultant close to the Socialist party. Mr Cusani is accused of bribery and corruption and helping to falsify Montedison group accounts.

According to Mr Martelli, Mr Sama said as he was given the money: "Oh, Claudio, look, this money is mine and from the family, we are like brothers." Mr Sama is married to Alessandra, one of the Ferruzzi founder's daughters.

Mr Sama, who also testified yesterday, admitted for the first time he had given money to Mr Martelli, although the two men gave different accounts of the events.

Mr Martelli, who was justice minister at the time, admitted he should have declared the funds but insisted he thought the money was from the family, not Montedison.

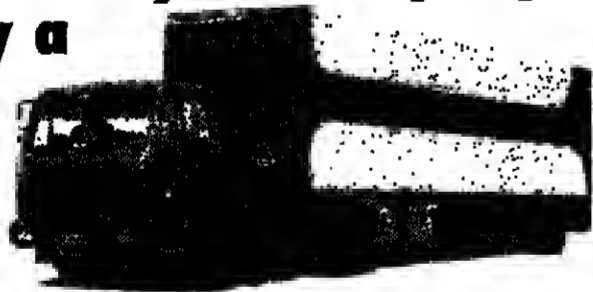
Mr Martelli is now the second former minister to admit illicitly receiving money in the Cusani trial. Neither has been asked to say how the money was spent.

Mr Sama also surprised the court by saying he had given £5bn to £7bn to Mr Bettino Craxi, the then Socialist leader, for the 1992 elections.

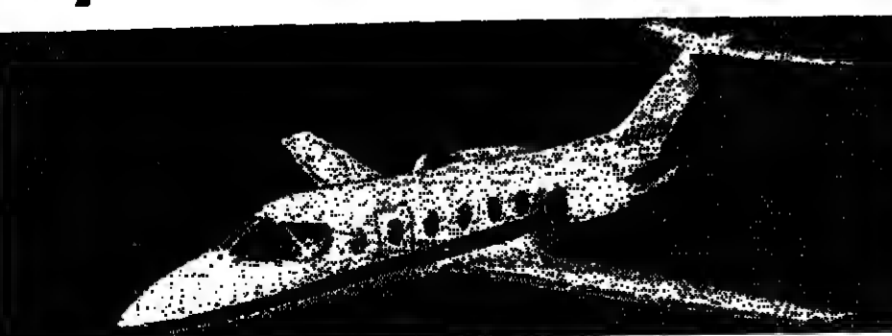
In another development, Mr Alfredo Vito, a former Christian Democrat deputy for Naples, has become the first member of parliament to be sentenced in the corruption scandals. As a result of plea bargaining and an agreement to hand back £5.5bn, he got a two-year suspended sentence.

Some £4bn will go to a children's fund run by the Naples city council and the rest will be deposited in the Bank of Italy at the discretion of the public prosecutor's office.

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The gavel falls on most of Uruguay Round

By David Dodwell, World Trade Editor, in Geneva

The whisper early on Sunday evening that Uruguay Round negotiators had settled a largely fought row over a US bid to dilute international restraint on the use of anti-dumping laws was a watershed at the end of an otherwise fraught weekend.

After a low point on Sunday morning when Sir Leon Brittan, the European Union's trade commissioner, talked of a crisis in negotiations with the US, news of a breakthrough on the anti-dumping issue

injected optimism. The view among negotiators was that if an issue as apparently intractable as anti-dumping could be resolved, then surely other outstanding disagreements - mainly linked with trade in services - must surely be resolved. Late yesterday, the US and the EU remained at loggerheads on US access to Europe's film and television markets, while US threats to exempt itself from offering full most-favoured-nation status in financial services remained. But, in the wake of an anti-dumping settlement, the gavel has fallen on most of the Uruguay Round agreement.

A glimpse into how the anti-dumping clash was settled provides insights into the carefully orchestrated fudges that have been needed in recent days to bring the Uruguay Round deal close to completion, and to ensure that lobbyists back home see the gains, rather than the losses, that have been involved in the process.

Of the 11 changes demanded by the US to the text of the Uruguay Round anti-dumping agreement - which is intended to provide stricter international discipline on dumping actions at a time of concern over their proliferation - US

negotiators will tell their domestic audience that it has scored seven out of 11.

Its key "victory" has been to win agreement over "standards of review", where the US had been protesting at proposed new Gatt powers to re-examine not just the handling of a dumping case, but the facts presented to it.

For opponents of the US proposals, there will be relief that demands for stricter anti-circumvention rules have been rejected. Similarly, the agreement will retain its "sunset" clause forcing a dumping duty to expire after a certain

number of years. Concessions have been made to the US, but these do not entitle the US to retain dumping duties indefinitely. More than 10 per cent of US dumping duties have been in place for more than 20 years.

Another important concession to the US has been amendment to the "standing" text which will entitle labour unions as well as companies to bring dumping complaints to the government. US demands that the "de minimis" clause be amended have been agreed. These set levels at which imports are so negligible that allegations of dumping will not

be considered. However, the US demand for the 2 per cent threshold to be cut to 0.5 per cent, has been rejected. It will stay at 2 per cent.

"Trying to read this agreement is rather like reading goats' entrails," one dumping negotiator commented. "We will all be looking at the same thing, but the US will tell its domestic audience one thing, and others will tell their domestic lobbyists another."

Japan, a fervent opponent of the proposed US changes, was licking its wounds yesterday. One senior negotiator said: "We did not want to touch the original text, so we are

not very happy about the outcome. But the political reality is that the US needed support in Congress, so that was a concession we have had to give to them."

He insisted that the compromise outcome "is at least less ambiguous than the original US proposals".

For Gatt negotiators, the compromise is historic: "Every previous deal has had to be imposed on countries with unreconciled disagreements," he said. "This is the first agreed text ever achieved in the area of anti-dumping," one said. Such are the climaxes to a negotiator's day.

Tokyo's policy on rice gives way to reality

As the Japanese government agonised yesterday before announcing the symbolic opening of the rice market, the country's department stores and supermarkets were clearing their shelves for the annual displays of ceremonial rice cakes for the New Year festivities.

Rice cultivation is still the basis of traditional events in Japan. Each year the emperor plants rice seedlings in his private rice paddy behind the palace walls and offers the crop to the deities in an imperial thanksgiving ritual. White rice cakes and *sake*, a rice wine, are symbols of purity, often used as offerings in Shinto and Buddhist ceremonies.

Emiko Terazono on weakening traditions and hard-nosed politics

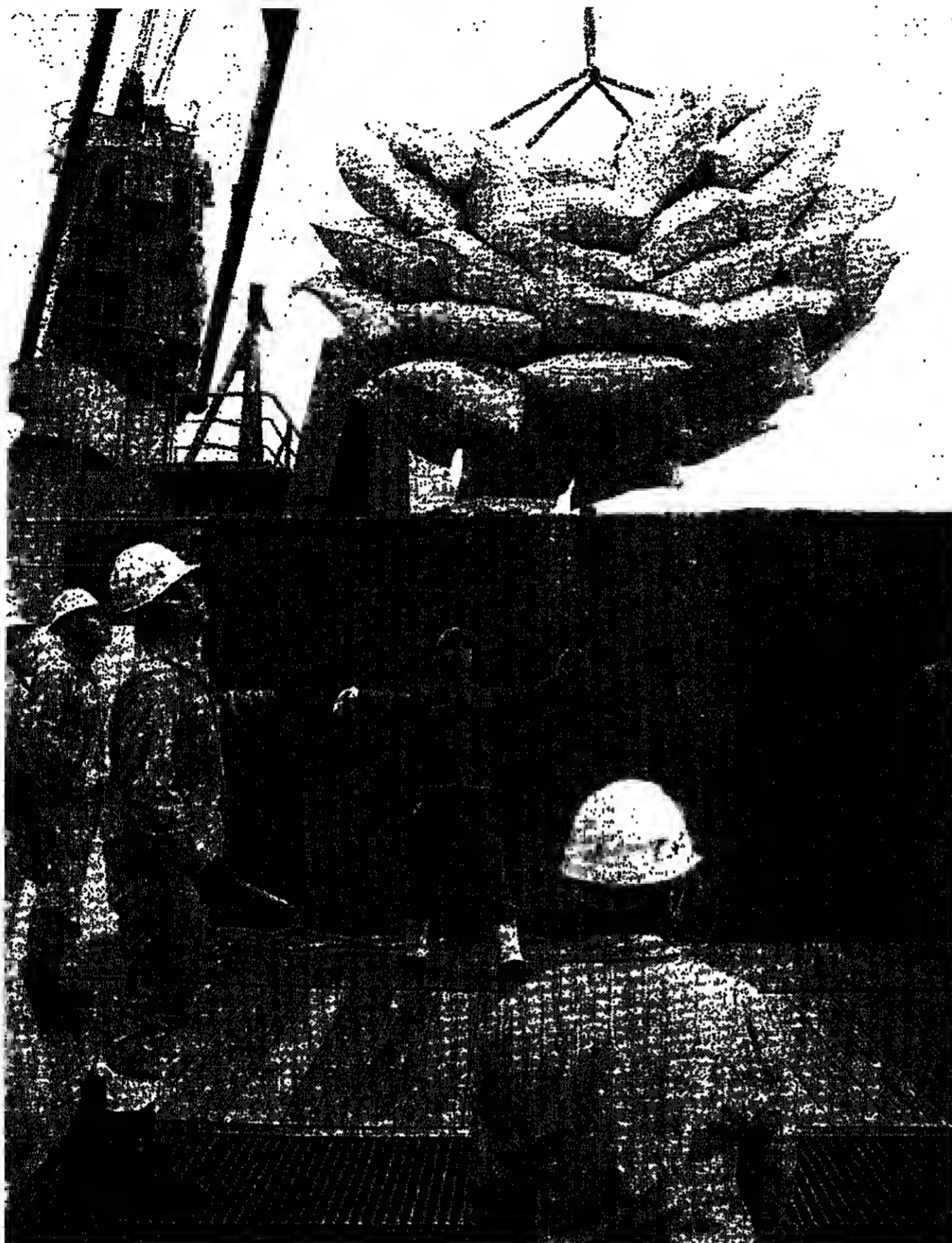
Japan's roots in rice farming are also given as a reason for its cultural differences with the west. Japanese are said to be cultivators, who plant and harvest a rice crop as a group and share the fruits of their labour. Westerners, the myth goes, are hunter-gatherers, more individualistic and more compulsive in that they eat what they kill.

However, the spiritual links between ordinary Japanese and the imperial family and the farming culture are weakening and young people are becoming ignorant of the symbolism of rice rituals.

In the past years, farmers' groups reached deep into Japan's past to conjure images of the sacred importance of rice and of their role as the custodians of the culture. But the inevitability of imports, and the fading of rice's spiritual significance among ordinary Japanese, have encouraged farmers to flex their muscles in search of a settlement of a material kind.

For the rice farmers who drove their tractors around Tokyo last week the interest was more in the amount of compensation than the protection of a tradition.

The argument against rice imports has also been supported by some environmentalists who claim that the change in landscape that would result from a reduction in the number of rice paddies would cause flooding during the mid-year rainy period. Consumer



Californian rice arrives in Kobe, western Japan, yesterday; but so far only to make up a harvest shortfall

Associated Press

groups, who oppose post-harvest fungicide and pesticide treatment, believe foreign rice is unsafe.

For politicians dependent on the rural vote, compensation for farmers is crucial if they are to maintain their appeal to the electorate. The size of the proposed imports - 4 to 8 per cent of domestic consumption over the six years from 1995 - is so little that the rural landscape is more likely to be affected by the modern civic centres and car parks demanded by politicians as compensation for their areas.

Theatricals for domestic consumption have also played

their part in Japan's agonising over the rice issue. Mr Tsutomu Hata, foreign minister, flew to Geneva last weekend in a last-minute protest. He followed a group of MPs belonging to the Liberal Democratic party and Social Democratic party from rice farming regions.

The government, meanwhile, has been waiting until the last moments before the Uruguay Round trade talks deadline to reveal its intentions to make concessions. Government officials have avoided a public debate and hoped to win public approval by stressing that Japan had to avoid being

blamed for the failure of the talks.

The enduring sanctity of rice in modern Japan has been a result of the strength of the rural vote, a legacy of the 38-year rule by the LDP. Uneven representation, where one rural vote is worth three votes in the cities, supported the LDP's majority in spite of a declining farming population. However, this is about to be changed by electoral reform, which Mr Hosokawa hopes to implement during the current session of parliament.

Meanwhile, the lifting of the symbolic ban will be good news for Japan's manufactur-

ers, who have faced international criticism for the country's trade surplus. Business leaders, who hope that an opening of the rice market will take the heat off export-oriented companies, have applauded Mr Hosokawa's decision.

Some in the business community hope that the benefits of cheaper rice will be passed on to consumers and in turn boost sales of other goods. Analysts estimate that imports of 4 per cent of domestic consumption in 1995 will result in a gain of ¥178bn (£1.2bn) for Japan.

Japanese premier secures coalition backing

Mr Morihiko Hosokawa, Japan's prime minister, won the crucial support of a key coalition party early today allowing him to unveil official approval of Japan's plan to allow limited rice imports to help clinch a Gatt world trade deal, Reuters reports from Tokyo.

Mr Hosokawa, after enduring weeks of hand-wringing and painful debate, announced the decision after a 3am cabinet meeting.

The Social Democrats had looked deeply divided yesterday over whether to back Mr Hosokawa on rice or support outraged farmers who account for a big portion of the party's declining support.

The party, the largest but most unstable in the alliance, could have brought down Mr Hosokawa's four-month-old government if it had decided to quit the coalition.

Such a development would have certainly held up a final agreement on a new world trade pact at the 115-state Uruguay Round of talks, due to wind up in Geneva tomorrow.

However, after marathon talks lasting nearly 12 hours, the party's top executive grudgingly agreed to leave the decision to chairman Mr Tomiichi Murayama, who said the Social Democrats must support the rice plan and stay within the coalition.

"We have had to accept that Hosokawa's decision (on rice) is right," Mr Murayama told a meeting of Social Democrat leaders.

"Our party's responsibility to help stabilise the government is increasing," he said as angry farmers protested in front of party headquarters in central Tokyo.

The issue has traumatised the Social Democrats, who are increasingly dependent on the farm vote as urban voters desert the hardline party in droves.

Mr Tsutomu Hata, the foreign minister, who returned to Tokyo early yesterday after a quick trip to Geneva to meet US and European trade officials, defended the decision as unavoidable.

"Everyone agreed that failure to conclude the Uruguay Round will hurt the global economy," he said.

Mr Hosokawa may have cleared one hurdle but more troubles lurk around the corner. The main opposition Liberal Democratic party had threatened to hold a key budget bill hostage if the prime minister gave in on the rice issue.

Chipmakers try to scuttle push for Gatt

By Louise Kehoe in San Francisco

US semiconductor makers are trying to scuttle the push for a final Gatt agreement by urging Congress members to vote against ratifying it, unless big changes are made on intellectual property rights protection.

"The entire industry will come down hard against Gatt," Mr Craig Barrett, chief operating officer of Intel, the world's biggest chipmaker, said. Chipmakers charge that in its present form, the draft Gatt threatens their ability to protect intellectual property rights, denies open access to the European market and weakens US anti-dumping provisions.

Mr Barrett is angered by provisions that might force Intel to license its patented technology to foreign makers. "If a foreign government decided it needed a chip industry, it could force us to license our technology," he said. The draft Gatt proposal states that a patent holder must be paid "adequate compensation", but it is unclear how that amount would be calculated.

"Our only recourse would be to appeal to a Gatt panel; by the time the issue was resolved, it could probably be moot," because semiconductor technology advances rapidly.

Deadline will be met say officials

By Frances Williams in Geneva

Trade diplomats yesterday moved to squash concerns that the complex and time-consuming tariff negotiations in the Uruguay Round of trade talks could not be completed by tomorrow's deadline.

"We will have completed the substantive market access negotiations by Wednesday," said a senior trade official. "What's on the table then will be final and cannot be withdrawn."

European Union negotiators caused consternation late last week when they said they might be able to conclude item-by-item tariff bargaining with just 15-20 countries, representing about 90 per cent of world trade. On Sunday the EU had definitively signed off on just one tariff accord - with Peru.

However, with the Uruguay Round rules package largely sewn up late on Sunday, trade officials have been meeting

round the clock to finalise deals with trading partners covering thousands of farm and industrial products. Intensive negotiations have also been taking place on opening markets for services.

Mr Peter Sutherland, Gatt director-general, said yesterday that tariff offers could not be reduced but could be improved after December 15. "That process will be one of verification and augmentation," he said.

Diplomats said it was not necessary for all 115 participants in the round to bargain with each other. The biggest 20 to 30 nations will settle on tariffs and then offer the same deal to others.

Smaller countries will be putting in tariff schedules based on their understanding of the deal on offer as it concerns them.

Least developed countries have been given extra time beyond tomorrow's deadline to prepare schedules.

EU acts to ease multiple share listings

By Norma Cohen, Investments Correspondent

European Union finance ministers yesterday approved a measure intended to reduce the administrative burdens on companies seeking share listings on more than one EU stock exchange.

The measure, which will be an amendment to the Listing Particulars Directive, will allow companies listed on one

exchange to use their existing documentation as the basis for an application for another exchange. Before becoming effective, the European parliament must give its opinion on the issue.

Currently, companies seeking listings outside their home country must prepare an entirely new set of documentation for a second listing, a requirement which can discourage cross-border listings.

Mr Paul Smeets, head of public policy and international relations at the London Stock Exchange, said that while the amendment was not revolutionary, "it is a first step towards cross-border listing. It is progress."

It is expected the amendment will smooth the way for the Eurofirst project under which the 250 largest EU corporations will be able to obtain cross-border listings. Eurofirst

will be open to those companies with a market capitalisation of at least £1bn (£700m), with annual turnover of at least £250m and which are prepared to seek a listing on at least five European exchanges outside their home country.

However, the creation of Eurofirst and the new listings amendment fall short of what the London Stock Exchange has been seeking and what many regard as essential to

genuine integration of European stock exchanges.

Sir Andrew Hugh Smith, London Stock Exchange chairman, has called for mutual recognition of listing requirements by EU stock exchanges. While the listing and reporting requirements need not be exactly alike, stock exchanges should agree to list the shares of those companies which have met listing requirements in their home states.

US takes aggressive line on export finance

Eximbank signs India deal

By Nancy Dunne in Washington

The US Export-Import Bank yesterday signed a \$60m (£40.2m) financing arrangement with India signalling its determination aggressively to match subsidised export financing by foreign governments in support of domestic industries.

The beneficiary of the tied aid deal is Raytheon, which will provide air traffic control

equipment to India's National Airports Authority.

Some 45 per cent of the financing will be provided by a grant from a multi-million dollar "war chest" established for the purpose. The rest of the financing, provided by Eximbank, is a loan carrying an interest rate of 6.6 per cent.

The last two Republican administrations were reluctant to employ tied aid, mingling commercial credit and govern-

ment grants, and often failed to use the various "war chests" provided by Congress. The Clinton administration has vowed to be more aggressive.

However, it was the Bush administration which first offered the financing in 1991, in an ultimately successful effort to get industrialised countries to curb the use of tied aid. A year later it "improved" its offer, boosting the grant component from 35 to 40 per cent.

Nigerian liquefied gas project to go ahead

By Robert Corzine in Vienna

A controversial Nigerian liquefied natural gas project which has been beset by political and commercial uncertainty is to go ahead, according to one of its main backers.

The multi-billion dollar project, one of the largest in the world under consideration, has been restructured to emphasise private sector involvement, according to Mr David Pearce, director of Shell International Gas.

He told a Financial Times conference in Vienna yesterday that the shareholding of the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation in the project would fall by 11 percentage points to 49 per cent.

Shell's share would rise by 4 percentage points, while that of Elf Aquitaine, the French state-owned oil company, would increase by 5 points. The International Finance Corporation, the private sector finance arm of the World Bank, would take a 2 per cent

stake. Agip, the Italian oil company, was also a partner.

Mr Pearce said a significant amount of the planned equity in the project would be placed in an escrow account to "establish financial confidence" among potential lenders. Shell is also assuming a larger role in the management of the development. The need to re-bid contracts for the project next year means it will not be completed before well into 1999.

The growing world demand

for gas which has encouraged companies to embark on projects such as that proposed for Nigeria was a recurrent theme among speakers at yesterday's conference. Shell, for example, predicted a 50 per cent increase in demand by 2010, excluding the former Soviet Union and eastern Europe.

Most agreed that the strongest growth was likely to come in Asia. Mr Fritz Voigt of Exxon suggested that gas would remain the fastest growing fuel there until 2010.

The optimism over steadily rising long-term demand was tempered, however, with concern over future prices, especially if oil prices remained low. Many speakers noted that gas prices would have to rise substantially if remote reserves were to be developed. But a rise in prices to the levels needed to sustain such projects might undercut the competitiveness of gas or lead to the abandonment of high volume, low value industrial markets.

Jakarta to buy Protons

Indonesia plans to buy Malaysian-manufactured Proton cars in exchange for Indonesian-made aircraft, reports Kieran Cooke.

Malaysia manufactures the Proton with Mitsubishi of Japan. Indonesia's heavily subsidised Industri Pesawat Terbang Nusantara manufactures the turboprop CN-235 aircraft with Casa of Spain.

Norwegians buy 25,000 tonnes of British rail

By Andrew Baxter

British Steel Track Products, based at Workington in northern England, has won its biggest ever European order from Norwegian State Railways, which is buying 25,000 tonnes of rail.

The order is understood to be worth about £10m, and took two years to negotiate. It will

run to the end of 1995, and could be extended to the end of the century.

The rails are to be used in NSB's expansion programme. It is upgrading strategic routes to take trains capable of 120mph. The Workington plant has changed production to make the 40-metre rails for NSB, four metres longer than it had been able to make.

1250 مالى

UK wins 2.5% VAT for works of art

By Andrew Hill in Brussels and Anthony Thornecroft in London

British auction houses yesterday welcomed a European compromise covering value added tax on antiques and art works, which should allow London to maintain its competitive edge against New York in the lucrative world art market.

European Union finance ministers ended 15 years of intermittent debate by agreeing a common VAT system for second-hand goods, which covers everything from Minis to Monets.

Under the complex compromise, works of art imported from outside the European Union into the UK will be subject to a reduced 2.5 per cent VAT until June 30, 1998.

Art works re-exported from the EU within two years of entry will be spared the tax altogether.

Ministers have yet to decide when the directive will take effect.

The UK, centre of the European trade in antiques, currently exempts art imports from VAT, encouraging non-European collectors to sell through auction houses such as Christie's and Sotheby's.

Auctioneers and dealers had feared that in the interests of fiscal harmonisation, EU ministers would force Britain to impose a heavier rate of VAT on imports.

All other member states will have to impose a rate of at least 6 per cent on art imports. Britain's right to levy a lower rate could be extended beyond 1998 if a special report to ministers by the end of 1998 concludes that increasing VAT would hamper the competitiveness of the European art market.

Commission officials claimed that art works imported for sale in Geneva or New York were subject to an average tax of some 3 per cent.

Christie's, which along with Sotheby's, dominates the international art market, gave a guarded welcome to the proposal.

Sir Anthony Tennant, chairman of Christie's, said: "We feel that this deal, tenaciously negotiated by Sir John Cope [UK paymaster general], represents the best solution possible to secure agreement and that it removes much of the uncertainty surrounding the market in London. While we remain deeply concerned about the position after 1998, we are

pleased that there is to be a review of the effect of an import tax before then. The net effect of these new proposals is minimal in the short term."

Mr Anthony Browne, a Christie's director, added that while the move was welcome, Christie's would "continue to argue vigorously that, if you set too high a rate, it will damage the European art market".

Sotheby's also expressed satisfaction. "The 2.5 per cent until 1998 will have only a marginal effect. We are pleased that the present uncertainty has ended."

Ministers also decided that VAT would be imposed only on the dealer's margin on the sale of second-hand goods, rather than the full value, and that sales of goods and art works between individuals would not be subject to VAT.

Certain member states will be exempt from elements of the new system during a transition period.

Separately, ministers asked the Commission to continue studying the harmonisation of withholding tax on savings, in spite of opposition from a number of countries, led by Britain and Luxembourg, to any harmonised system of savings tax.

The Commission thinks again after health ministers fail to agree

EU in fresh look at tobacco ban

By Andrew Hill in Brussels

The European Commission agreed yesterday to re-examine its proposed ban on tobacco advertising, after EU health ministers again failed to agree on the controversial directive.

Mr Padraig Flynn, European

health commissioner, said it was a "matter of great regret" that member states were unable to agree on a ban, which would end all tobacco advertising in the European Union, except at the point of sale.

The proposal has been fiercely opposed by the UK,

which favours a system of voluntary restraint, backed by a blocking minority of Germany, Denmark, the Netherlands and Greece.

Lawyers advising the council of ministers yesterday decided to press for a ban under single market rules in the EU

treaty. The Commission argues that unless conflicting national legislation is harmonised, publications containing tobacco advertising will not circulate freely around the Union.

But the Commission and the Belgian presidency said yesterday they were extremely sur-

prised that the council's legal service had raised such objections after two years of debate on the measure.

Mr Flynn said he could not comment on the possible options for the Commission until he had considered the legal base for any new approach to the problem.

TV job for Ballardur ally

By Alice Rawsthorn in Paris

Mr Jean-Pierre Elkabbach yesterday took charge of France's two state-controlled television stations when he was appointed chairman of France Television as part of the government's shake-up of the media.

Mr Elkabbach, 58, is known in France as an aggressive television interviewer.

He is close to a number of prominent conservative politicians, notably Mr Edouard Balladur, the prime minister.

He co-authored a book with Mr Balladur in the late 1980s.

The selection of Mr Elkabbach for such a sensitive position as the head of France Television, which controls the

France 2 and France 3 channels, has been interpreted as an unashamedly political choice by the Balladur administration.

Mr Elkabbach came to the fore in French television under the conservative governments of the 1970s, when the state exercised stringent control of the media.

He was so closely associated with the right that when the Socialists took power in 1981 crowds chanted "Elkabbach Resign!" at a victory rally.

However, Mr Elkabbach eventually became close to Mr François Mitterrand, the socialist president, after collaborating with him on a television biography.

He has been regarded as the favourite to take charge of

France Television since Mr Herve Bourges, his left-leaning predecessor, announced he would not stay on for a second term.

Mr Bourges, who implemented a radical cost-cutting programme at France 2 and France 3, last week became France's ambassador to Unesco.

The appointment of Mr Elkabbach comes at a time of sweeping reform across French television.

Mr Alain Carignon, the communications minister, is tabling legislation to liberalise the broadcasting system.

His reforms will include relaxing controls over investment and renegotiating the licence of Canal-Plus, the successful pay-TV channel.

Mayor of Hamburg accused of racism

The mayor of Hamburg was yesterday accused of stoking up racism by demanding population quotas to bar non-Germans from moving into parts of Germany's second-highest city, *Reuter* reports.

Mayor Henning Voscherau told the newspaper *Bild* he wanted to stop the creation of ghettos in poor neighbourhoods which were being "threatened" by inflows of foreigners.

"Whoever refers to 'threatened neighbourhoods' must know that he has contributed to the anti-foreigner climate," said government ombudsman Ms Cornelia Schmalz-Jacobson.

She said Mr Voscherau's comments were racist propaganda: "(They) show that he is not ready to accept that the non-German population has long since become an integral part of the Federal Republic."

Mr Voscherau argued there must be limits to the proportion of foreigners living in certain neighbourhoods. "If you have a neighbourhood where 50 per cent or more of the residents are foreigners, then it must be possible to say that is enough," he said.

Germany's 6m foreign-born residents, mainly labourers from Turkey and southern Europe, make up about 7 per cent of the total population.

GM and Polish carmaker reach assembly deal

By Kevin Done in London and Christopher Bobinski in Warsaw

General Motors, the US carmaker, reached agreement yesterday to begin car assembly in Warsaw in a joint venture with FSO, the Polish state-owned carmaker.

The deal, reached after more than two years of negotiations, marks an important step forward in the modernisation of the east European car industry.

In the first stage the venture will assemble up to 10,000 four-door Opel Astra small family cars a year from SKD (semi-knocked-down) kits supplied from GM plants in west Europe.

GM will send already painted car bodies from its assembly plant at Antwerp, Belgium, for final trim and assembly in Warsaw. Components such as engines and transmissions will be supplied from its plant in Bochum, Germany.

Production will begin in the second half of next year.

Initially GM will invest DM9.4m (£3.73m) to take a 50 per cent stake and management control in the venture, which will have a workforce of about 250. It will invest a further DM10m within a few months, which will increase its stake to 65-70 per cent.

Under the terms of the deal GM envisages moving later to a more ambitious second stage in which cars would be assembled from CKD (completely knocked down) kits, which would require body welding and painting to be carried out in Poland.

Output for the second stage could be increased to up to 33,000 cars a year on three shifts with a workforce of about 1,000. The second stage would increase investment in the project to around \$60m.

As part of the planned co-operation with FSO, GM would aim to take part in developing the automotive parts supply industry in Poland.

Last week it announced that ACG, the GM group's parts subsidiary, had signed a memorandum of understanding with FSO and its affiliate ZEM-ELK

to set up a feasibility study into joint ventures in components areas such as wiring harnesses, lighting, metal and plastic parts, and aftermarket products.

The memorandum was also signed by two of ACG's worldwide divisions, Packard Electric and Inland Fisher Guide.

GM said several other parts divisions of ACG were also in discussions with potential Polish partners inside and outside the FSO group.

Mr Marek Pol, the new Polish industry minister, said yesterday profit tax waivers would be extended up to the amount of GM's DM9.4m investment. "There have been no inducements other than those regularly extended to foreign investors," Mr Pol said yesterday.

However, the contract does give assurances that the Polish government will compensate GM for losses resulting from future changes in tariff and tax conditions.

FSO, which has fought for the link with GM for three years, will now be looking to its foreign partner to provide a new model to replace its Polonez saloon car whose design dates back to the 1970s.

The agreement signed yesterday commits both sides to an examination of the feasibility of such a project over the next six months.

In the meantime GM will work with the Polish carmaker to assist in "its restructuring to become an internationally competitive car manufacturer".

The first 10 months of this year saw Poles buying 227,000 cars or 29 per cent more than in the same period last year. This includes the sale of 65,000 imported vehicles of which 5,635 were Astras from GM.

FSO has sold 58,000 Polonez cars this year. The domestic car market is expected to expand to 350,000 a year by the end of the century when tariffs at 41 per cent of a vehicle's value are to be reduced to zero.

Fiat, which owns the FSM car plant in Bielsko Biala in southern Poland, is planning to assemble the Uno there, of which the Italian car maker has sold 16,000 models this year. FSM produces the Cinquecento and the smaller Fiat 126 car at Bielsko.

Bulgaria suffers wave of strikes

A wave of strikes and protests by workers demanding overdue wages spread in Bulgaria yesterday, *Reuter* reports from Sofia.

The Podkrepa trade union called ore and coal miners out on strike from yesterday and said it expected the stoppage to attract a total of 25,000 miners by the end of the day.

The other strong labour grouping, the Confederation of Independent Trade Unions which launched an ore-mining strike 13 days ago, said 20,000 strikers were to decide yesterday whether to accept an agreement signed by the non-party government and union leaders on Friday.

The Trud daily said yesterday the government had promised to transfer 283m leva (\$28m) to the ore mines.

But the Podkrepa mining federation said the union had demanded documents to guarantee that government promises would be fulfilled.

"We demand a decision on which mines will be closed and our people must know where they will work afterwards," it said.

Delays in the restructuring of the pollution-hit ore mining industry, which produces mainly lead and zinc, are widespread in the state sector where unreformed enterprises are floundering.

PROFESSIONALS PREFER SHELL

WHEN I RECOMMEND SHELL HELIX ULTRA, I'M DOING MYSELF OUT OF A JOB.

We'd like to apologise to garage mechanic Arnold Micus. On the one hand, he has to admit that Shell Helix Ultra is the best oil money can buy. On the other, he agrees that it protects engines so well that they're less likely to need repairing. So while he's sure his customers will be more than satisfied with Helix Ultra's fully synthetic formulation, he knows he won't be seeing them quite so often. Once again, sorry Arnold.

NEWS: THE AMERICAS

Clinton sees 'danger' in health costs

By Jurek Martin, US Editor, in Washington

President Bill Clinton yesterday warned that it would prove impossible to cut social welfare spending without first attacking healthcare costs.

Next year, the US states, for the first time, would be spending more on health programmes than on education, he said. This was "a serious danger signal" for the whole country.

His forum was a "town meeting" of federal entitlements, at Bryn Mawr college in suburban Philadelphia.

Mr Clinton came to office promising the end of "welfare as we know it". He has already appointed a bipartisan commission to propose necessary reforms. He has frequently spoken of the possibility of putting a two-year limit on welfare payments, after which recipients would have to take public service jobs.

But the main thrust of his largely unscripted, 45-minute lecture yesterday was again on healthcare. Medicare and Medicaid programmes combined, he noted, accounted for about 30 per cent of the total entitlement budget, second only to the 43 per cent consumed by

social security payments to the elderly.

Discretionary welfare spending, on the other hand, amounted to a mere 2 per cent of entitlement spending, with an additional 4 per cent taken by the food stamp poverty programme. The current average monthly welfare benefit, he said, was lower in real terms than it was 20 years ago, and was only costing more because of the growth in the number of poor people.

He quoted approvingly a Washington Post editorial yesterday which cited Medicare and Medicaid as the "real budget busters".

From 1994-98, he said, the health care slice of the budget, in real terms, was projected to rise by about 5.5 per cent and social security by 2 per cent, against a 5 per cent decline in defence spending and a 2.5 per cent drop in general entitlements.

In the current fiscal year, entitlements, dominated by health care and social security, comprise about 47 per cent of the overall US federal budget, versus 21 per cent for defence, 18 per cent for non-defence discretionary spending, and 14 per cent for repayment of the national debt.



HOME IN TRIUMPH: Endeavour returns to Cape Canaveral with the Hubble astronauts. Picture: Reuters

'Flawless' mission over

By Clive Cookson, Science Editor

Seven US space veterans returned home to Cape Canaveral in triumph yesterday, after completing all scheduled repairs to the crippled Hubble Space Telescope.

"Thank you for the flawless flight," mission control told them as the shuttle Endeavour rolled to a stop. "We look forward to using [Hubble] to see further into our universe than ever before."

The 11-day mission - which some commentators had called

the greatest challenge for the US space agency NASA since the moon landings more than 20 years ago - was a very public success.

In the course of five televised space walks, the crew (average age 46) completed all their scheduled tasks, surpassing NASA officials' highest hopes. They replaced or repaired 11 defective parts on Hubble, including lenses to correct the telescope's short-sightedness.

Astronomers will not know whether the mission has restored Hubble's full sight until NASA has completed sev-

eral weeks of tests.

The first images from the repaired telescope are expected in February.

NASA was also keen to point out that the repair mission would bolster the agency's credibility in arguing for at least \$100m from Congress to build a permanent space station in orbit.

It showed how well astronauts can work in space, with miniature electronic components and with bus-sized pieces of hardware such as Hubble itself.

Texan high-speed rail project near collapse

By Richard Tomkins in New York and Tracy Corrigan in London

Plans to build a \$6.8bn high-speed railway linking the main cities in Texas were on the brink of collapse yesterday after Morrison Knudsen, the US construction group, decided to back away from a key element of the financing.

The group said it had decided to withdraw its guarantee for an initial \$200m convertible bond offering because it was not prepared to take the risk alone.

The project now faces missing a December 31 deadline for having in

place its first-round funding of \$170m. The Texas TGV, using technology developed for France's train "a grande vitesse", would have been the first high-speed system in North America. The railway industry had hoped it would set a precedent for similar projects across the US and Canada.

The railway was due to have been built by the Texas TGV Corporation, a private-sector consortium comprising Morrison Knudsen and private Texan interests.

GEC Alsthom, developer of the French TGV, and Bombardier, GEC Alsthom's North American licensee, were to provide the technology.

Menem gets his way on route to second term

John Barham on a step forward for Argentina's president - and misgivings about its democracy

President Carlos Menem and his old rival Raúl Alfonsín, in a ceremony transmitted live on Argentine national television yesterday, signed an agreement that opens the way for the fulfilment of Mr Menem's greatest ambition.

He has been pushing with almost indecent haste to remove the 140-year-old constitution's ban on successive presidential terms so that he can stand for re-election when his mandate ends in July 1995.

In exchange for hacking constitutional reform, Mr Alfonsín's Radical party won greater participation in government, Congress and the judiciary. The divided and demoralised Radicals, realising that they have little chance of winning the next elections, decided they had more to gain by negotiating with Mr Menem than obstructing his ambitions.

The ceremony yesterday was the culmination of six weeks of negotiations behind closed doors.

Congress must approve constitutional change by a two-thirds majority. Since the Radicals and Mr Menem's peronists control more than 80 per cent of the seats in Congress, approval by Christmas is almost a foregone conclusion.

Mr Menem is in such a hurry that Congress will have only five days of debate before rising until March. Elections for the constituent assembly that will rewrite the constitution are to be held then.

As part of their price for support, the Radicals also demanded a purge of the nine-member Supreme Court. Justices are appointed for life, to insulate them from political interference, but the opposition says the court lost its independence after Mr Menem packed it with pro-government justices.

Mr Menem duly forced the resignation of two justices and a third promised to retire in February. Last week, Radicals and Peronists agreed on their replacements - one justice for each party and an independent.

For the pessimists, the horse-trading and negotiations in smoke-filled rooms bode ill for Argentina's fragile democracy, the 10th anniversary of which was celebrated last Friday.

It might be appropriate that the celebrations were uninspiring. There was a rally in a sports stadium. Mr Menem and Mr Alfonsín planted 10 saplings in a Buenos Aires park. Vandals uprooted them the next day.

There was no sign of the enthusiasm in December 1983 that had greeted Mr Alfonsín's inauguration. That ended seven years of military rule which was unusually brutal, even by Latin American standards.

However, most Argentines seem to approve the Peronist-Radical pact. La Nación, Argentina's leading conservative newspaper, is one of the few dissenting voices. It protested in an editorial that "a small group of men whose only qualification is to have been designated by the two leaders [are] discussing the text of Argentina's future constitution as if [theirs] was the final instance of the reform process."

It said this is being done with the "evident intention of delivering the constituent assembly a tightly-closed package" to be rapidly rubber-stamped.

Such secretiveness is a striking feature of Mr Menem's presidency and, to a lesser degree, of Mr Alfonsín's years in power. Mr Menem has amassed more power than any leader since Juan Perón ruled Argentina from 1946-55.

Perón was Argentina's only president to change the constitution and win re-election. But he was toppled by the military, who scrapped the changes.

Mr Menem has drawn the teeth of the supreme court and the judiciary. He ignores congress and rules by decree when necessary. He claims Argentina's economic "reforms" would not have been possible without the presidential system that we have. These

reforms have brought strong growth and low inflation, further re-inforcing his popularity and authority.

The last 10 years have seen important advances. Civilian courts tried and jailed generals for human rights violations in the 1970s, although Mr Menem later pardoned them. The press is growing in confidence and aggressiveness. The arts are flourishing. The military, discredited by its disastrous 1976-83 government, now proclaims its commitment to democracy.

Indeed, democracy has survived considerable stresses, such as four army mutinies, 13 general strikes and the hyperinflation of July 1989 that drove Mr Alfonsín from office five months early.

While support for democracy and Mr Menem's market-oriented reforms has never been stronger, Argentines complain that education, health, administration of justice and employment opportunities have deteriorated since 1983 while corruption is growing.

Six military coups since 1930, guerrilla warfare in the 1970s and 60 years of economic upheaval have crippled the machinery of government. Democrats argue that Argentina must consolidate stability by rebuilding its institutions of state.

Political analysts say that, although Mr Alfonsín restored democracy and Mr Menem brought economic stability, the latter is not the man to rebuild Argentina's institutions.

Argentines often say their greatest hope for the future is the "democracy generation" of children born after 1983. These are supposed to grow up untainted by the violent, bitter hatreds which have divided their parents and grandparents.

If the Peronist-Radical "tightly-closed package" is approved swiftly and with little debate, Argentina will lose a fine opportunity to design new political structures in order to help it avoid a repetition of its blood-soaked history.

US court ruling throws insurers into confusion

By George Graham in Washington

US life insurance companies are bracing themselves for an administrative upheaval affecting \$570bn of assets, after the Supreme Court ruled yesterday that these funds must be managed in line with pension protection laws.

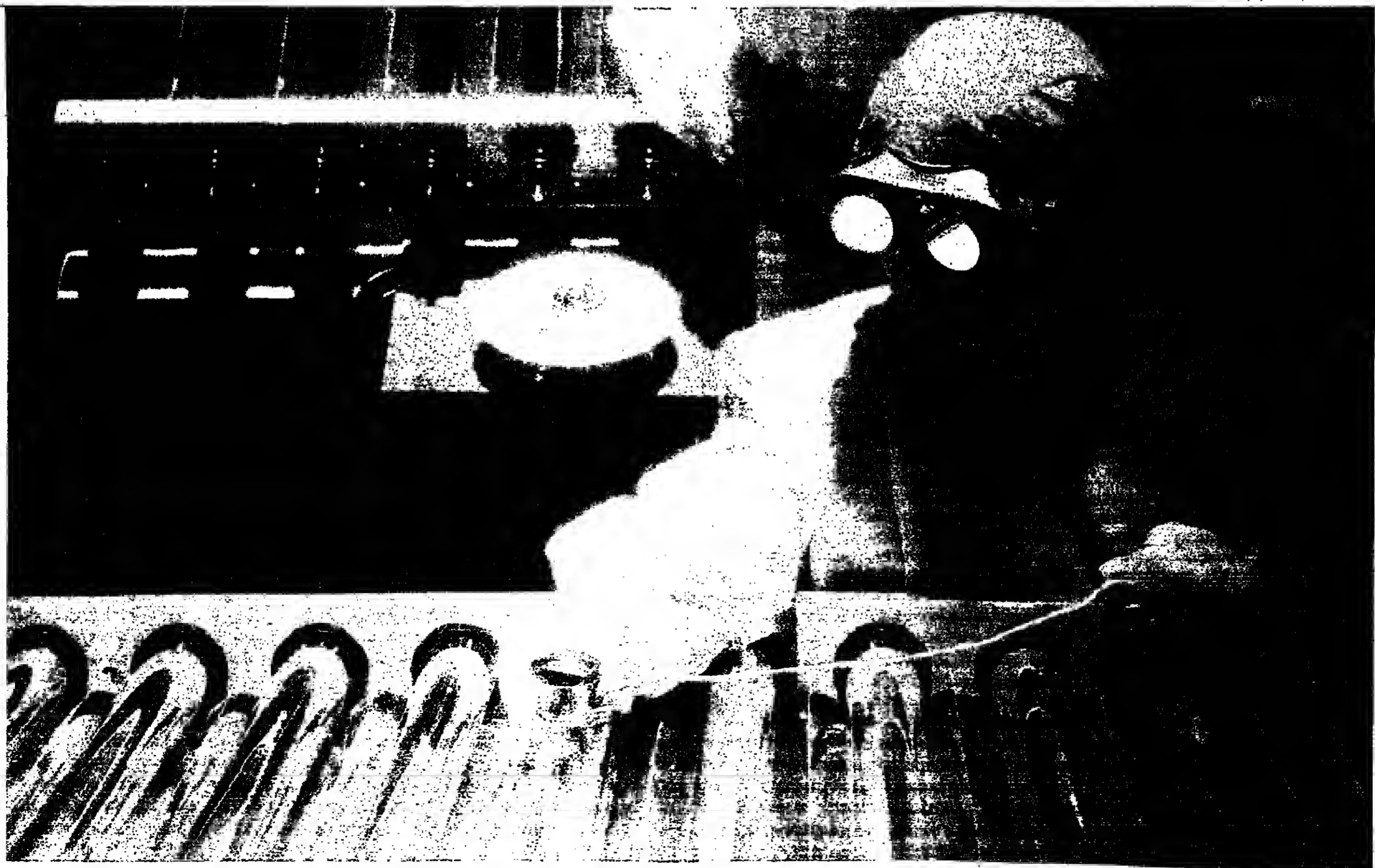
The court said an insurance company must meet the fiduciary standards of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act for premiums paid by a group pension plan, even when the money is placed in its general account.

Some insurance executives feared the ruling could oblige companies to set up segregated accounts for their group

pension clients, which would create great difficulties in dividing the assets now pooled in their general accounts.

Worries about the solvency of many insurance companies have led some pension plans in recent years to ask for segregated accounts, but three-quarters of the pension fund assets held by insurance companies are still pooled in general accounts.

General accounts have been thought to be governed primarily by state law, which in most cases says all policyholders must be treated equally. The federal act, though, can require additional protection for pension plan participants.



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Public buying of land urged in Japan

By Robert Thomson in Tokyo

A campaign is gathering momentum for government assistance to clear Japanese banks' bad loans, as Mr. Gaiishi Hiraiwa, chairman of the Keidanren, the leading business federation, yesterday proposed public funds be used for purchases intended to stimulate the property market.

The banks' losses are linked to the price collapse of their property collateral, and fears are growing that the commercial property market will be in free fall next year unless the government intervenes to support prices.

However, Mr. Hiraiwa's call for intervention was aimed not only at banks, but also at the many non-financial companies which invested in property projects during the late 1980s, the so-called bubble era, and are facing huge losses.

"Now seems to be the right time for the government to consider buying up land," Mr. Hiraiwa said. His suggestion echoes proposals by other business leaders for the government to buy land for public use, and even to purchase property that will not ultimately be used for public purposes, if only to stimulate the market.

The government is likely to consider advance land purchases as part of a stimulatory package, for which preparation is expected to begin this week. The Construction Ministry has indicated that it would like an easing of land transaction taxes, but the Finance Ministry is likely to oppose any measure that would reduce tax income.

Banks complain they have been unable to sell land held as collateral because the property market is "dead", while the rate of commercial vacancies in Tokyo is estimated at 10 per cent and rising. In areas developed rapidly during the bubble years, the vacancy rate is close to 50 per cent and the determination of developers to complete projects is still adding to the surplus of commercial space.

Demand for residential property has risen this year, but a study by the Real Estate Companies' Association estimates that 81 per cent of apartment buyers in the Tokyo area in 1988-92 are sitting on large potential losses.

The association calculates the average loss for an apartment bought in 1988 at ¥12m (£73,500). This rises to ¥22m for an apartment bought in 1990 and ¥18m for a 1991 apartment.

NEWS IN BRIEF

France, Germany in bid to free prisoners

Elder statesmen from France and Germany were in Baghdad yesterday to seek the release of the last two westerners imprisoned in Iraq. Renter reports from Baghdad. Mr. Serge Boisdevaux, a former French Foreign Ministry secretary-general, is seeking freedom for Mr. Jean-Luc Bariller, 25, Mr. Hans-Jürgen Wischniewski, a Middle East specialist in Germany's opposition Social Democratic party, is seeking the release of Mr. Kai Sandermann, 28. Both prisoners are serving eight-year sentences for illegally entering Iraq.

China factory blaze kills 60

Fire ripped through a textile factory in the southern Chinese city of Fuzhou yesterday, killing 60 people and injuring eight others, Renter reports from Hong Kong. The official Xinhua news agency said the fire at Gaotai Textile also destroyed a warehouse and a dormitory.

Shadow role for Lange

Mr. David Lange, former New Zealand prime minister, was appointed foreign affairs spokesman in the shadow cabinet by Ms Helen Clark, opposition Labour party leader yesterday, writes Terry Hall in Wellington. Mr. Lange is widely held responsible for a rift with the US, Britain and Australia from 1984 when he was foreign affairs minister and premier. Then, New Zealand banned visits by nuclear-armed vessels, legislation over which led to the break-up of the post-war ANZUS treaty.

Ciskei ruler cleared

Brigadier Oupa Gqozo, ruler of South Africa's Ciskei black homeland, was found not guilty in the homeland's Supreme Court yesterday of murdering a political opponent. Renter reports from Bisho. The case followed the January 1991 death of Mr. Charles Sebe, former security chief, who had allegedly plotted a coup.

Disappointed Palestinians vent their fury as peace accord deadline passes

Mood darkens in Gaza's camps

By Julian Ozanne in Jabalya Camp, occupied Gaza

It should have been a day of celebration marking the beginning of the end of 27 years of Israeli occupation of the crowded, impoverished Gaza Strip.

But instead, after Israel failed to meet yesterday's deadline under the peace accord to start withdrawing its troops, crowds of Palestinian youths vented their frustration in traditional fashion: lobbing stones and insults at heavily armed Israeli troops stationed behind barbed wire fences.

In the sprawling rubbish-strewn Jabalya refugee camp, the birthplace of the Palestinian uprising, youths in sandals and black and white headscarves ran to the fences of Israel's military camp and sent burning tyres into the compound. When soldiers in helmets and bullet-proof jackets moved towards the stone-throwers and shot plastic bullets the youths clapped and whistled.

"I am not afraid to die," said 17-year-old Ahmed al-Hinawi, one of the youths taunting the soldiers and holding a large rock in his hand. "Death is in God's will and if I die I will be a martyr."

Two blocks away residents gathered to mourn the death of a Palestinian who killed himself while training with a machine gun. Outside the concrete breeze-block home pictures of Mr. George Habash, leader of a Palestinian faction opposed to the peace process, were festooned from the roof top.

Yesterday was business as usual in the strip although Colonel Shukri Shih-rur, deputy military commander, said the army had issued orders to the soldiers to "be sensitive" and prevent incidents or accidents. By the end of the day three Palestinians had been killed and several wounded in separate incidents across Gaza. One was shot dead as he tried to drive a stolen ambulance booby-trapped with explosives into an army jeep.

"You can see how desperate people are," said Mr. Mansour al-Shawa, the mayor-designate of Gaza City. "The mood is filthy. People are really upset and disappointed that the Israelis won't

even stick to an agreement which gives us virtually nothing."

Mr. al-Shawa said opposition to the peace process was mounting day by day. "We thought we were on the way to regaining some of our dignity and alleviating the pressures, misery and poverty, but now people feel cheated. Many more people now are opposed to the peace. They say they prefer to live under occupation than give up all their rights."

The mood in Gaza was repeated across the occupied West Bank yesterday. In Jericho, the designated capital of future Palestinian self-government, Palestinians shut their businesses to protest against the delay in Israeli military withdrawal. In Nablus soldiers also clashed with Palestinian militants.

Palestinians and Israelis have warned that extremism is bound to grow as uncertainty sets in about the future of the peace process. For the Islamic fundamentalists and the PLO factions which oppose the peace accord, the delay in implementation of troop withdrawal provided a rallying call to disaffected Palestinians.

"You see, we can never have peace with Israelis," said Mr. Hisham al-Akbra, a 21-year-old student who lives with 13 other family members in a four-roomed shack in Jabalya camp.

Like many in Jabalya Mr. al-Akbra is a refugee who yearns after his ancestral land now in Israel and who has little hope of returning home under the peace accord.

"Even if the troops leave Gaza we will continue attacking them and Yasser Arafat cannot stop that. We don't want this peace. We want to wait and continue the struggle until we are stronger to win all our rights to our land and the right of the refugees to return."

"The Israelis will never give anything. They show this every day. We will have to fight them until we kill them all or send them back to the countries they came from."

The message is one many Palestinians find distasteful. But every day of delay threatens to strengthen the hands of extremists to the long-term detriment of a peaceful transition.



Palestinian youths throw stones after setting fire to tyres at the main entrance of an Israeli military base in the Jabalya refugee camp

Philippines, Westinghouse talks fail

By José Galang in Manila

Philippine negotiations with Westinghouse Electric of the US to settle court cases in the US and Switzerland over construction of a nuclear power plant have collapsed, according to Mr. Delfin Lazaro, energy secretary.

The negotiators described Westinghouse's position in the talks as "contrary to the country's dignity, interests and laws". The Philippines will now pursue claims filed against Westinghouse before the International Arbitration Court in Geneva.

It will also appeal a case it had filed in a US court against Westinghouse alleging the US company had used bribery to win the contract. The New Jersey federal district court last May cleared Westinghouse of the charge. The appeal will be filed on December 20.

China tries to improve air safety

By Tony Walker in Beijing

China's aviation industry is in crisis after a spate of hijackings and three air crashes this year, according to the country's civil aviation chief.

Mr. Jiang Zhuping, head of the Civil Aviation Administration of China (CAAC), urged drastic measures to improve pilot performance and guard against further disasters. He was quoted in the English-language China Daily yesterday as calling for air safety to be an "overwhelming priority". His comments coincided with

the ninth hijacking this year of a Chinese airliner to Taiwan, further compounding Beijing's embarrassment over its air safety record. The hijacker commandeered the aircraft by pretending to have a bomb in his pocket.

"Every airline, airport, navigation and maintenance unit will be checked in the campaign to close safety loopholes and tighten discipline," Mr. Jiang said.

He warned that those responsible for failing to uphold safety standards would face criminal prosecution. Procedures at China's hard-pressed airports are lax.

CAAC has sent inspection teams to airports and airlines throughout China to check on standards. "Poorly qualified pilots would either be demoted or have their licences revoked," China Daily said.

International aviation experts have long been warning that China's airline boom (new airlines have mushroomed in the past few years to cope with a surge in demand) has put an intolerable strain on resources.

The rash of hijackings to Taiwan has fuelled tensions between Beijing and Taipei, with China alleging that the Taiwanese refusal to repatriate hijackers was compounding the problem. In Taipei, Mr. Jason Hu, Taiwan government spokesman, mocked Chinese safety standards. "In one of the hijackings, a bar of soap was used. This time it's something in a pocket. Next time a toothpick will do."

China's air passenger traffic is growing by at least 25 per cent a year, the fastest in the world. It now has 39 registered airlines.

Land bill leaves Australians unclear where they stand

Nikki Tait on an Aborigine rights law that pleases few

Noel Pearson, a 28-year-old lawyer, tells a group of Australian senators why he, and fellow Aborigines, negotiated a million pounds rights deal with the government: "It was a salvage exercise - a desperate salvage exercise."

Michael Mansell, speaking for the more radical Aboriginal Alliance Committee, tells the senators that the proposed legislation which has come out of those negotiations and could be passed into law this week, would do little to help his people. Worse, it could impede their rights in some areas.

Both men are presenting their views in a Canberra committee room which, with its air-conditioning and wood-paneled walls, is far from the scorched red earth at the centre of this fight. There, everyone agrees, Aborigines communities with rudimentary education and limited access to information, have little hope of grasping the complex legal tangle that is going on.

"I can't say that half of Aborigines have any understanding of this bill," says Mr. Mansell.

The Australian government's native title bill is also perplexing the business community. Lawyers for the nation's mining and resource-based companies have spent weeks scouring the wording and wondering whether money poured into project development would now be secure from lengthy legal battles.

"Let's put it like this. The lawyers haven't found any problems - yet," says one mining executive, when asked about the likely go-ahead for a stalled multi-million-dollar deal. Summing up the general concern, Mr. John Prescott, head of BHP, Australia's largest industrial company, has likened the legislation to "reading porridge".

For all the confusion, its significance is difficult to under-

state. In simple economic terms, land-related industries are crucial to the nation's prosperity. Mining and agriculture, for example, account for about 7.5 per cent of gross domestic product and provide more than 60 per cent of merchandise exports.

The native title bill represents an attempt by today's Australia to come to terms with a less than glorious aspect of its past. When European settlers first arrived in Botany Bay in the late 18th century, they worked on the premise that land was uninhabited. This was despite an evi-

dence of a large indigenous population who were simply "dispossessioned". This was compounded by decades of shoddy treatment meted out to the Aboriginal community. A law prohibiting racial discrimination came into force only in 1975.

Unemployment is high among indigenous people and social conditions are poor. Tensions lurk close to the surface. The death recently of Daniel Yock, a young Aborigine dancer who had been arrested in a Brisbane street brawl, prompted riotous demonstrations, allegations of police brutality, and a public inquiry.

The immediate catalyst for some form of native title legislation has been legal rather than moral, however. Last year, the Australian high court decreed that native title could exist where Aborigines had maintained a close and continuing relationship with the land, although it added that land titles acquired under

The native title bill represents an attempt by today's Australia to come to terms with a less than glorious aspect of its past

accepted law since European settlement should not be disturbed. The bill is an attempt to marry these two pronouncements.

Moreover, as more radical voices such as Mr. Mansell's point out, even where Aborigines do establish native title they would not get back everything which the land holds. Mineral rights, for instance, would remain with the Crown.

While the mining and pastoral industries know that government would pick up compensation costs, this would not prevent long hearings to establish native title rights. In the private sector, it would probably incur legal and other costs.

Meanwhile, the ability of native title claimants or holders to negotiate over developments may lead to unwanted delays. Such uncertainties - and there are others - could affect the availability and cost of project finance, it is argued. The nation's biggest mining companies warned this month that the need to establish the native title position before beginning exploration would divert the industry's investment abroad. "You'll see the exploration dollar vote with its feet," says one executive.

And for the general public, there is the big unanswered question of how much the compensation claims would cost, but the government refuses to be drawn. One Treasury official has hinted that higher taxes may be down the road.

Opposition leaders have warned that the sums, including the land fund, could be considerable: the government says it is impossible to assess, although it expects that the number of successful native title claims would be limited.

Judging by opinion polls, this leaves the public as wary as everyone else about the legislation's merits.

Two top economic posts were recently filled by those believed to be reformers, including Mr. Yun Gil-bok as chairman of the economic policy committee of the Central People's Committee, the country's senior executive body, and Mr. Hong Sok-hyong as state planning chief.

Efforts to attract foreign investment have also accelerated in recent weeks. The government has approved legislation allowing foreign bank operations and foreigners to lease land and visit free trade zones without visas. This follows introduction of a new foreign investment law last year that offered tax incentives for joint ventures, although barriers remain on the repatriation of profits.

South Korean and some western companies, such as Unilever, are studying setting up light industrial plants in North Korea if the dispute over the inspection of the North's nuclear facilities is resolved.

North Korea's interest in developing light industry using western aid would enable it to provide consumer goods to the population in the hope of retaining support for the government. It would promote the production of goods suitable for export, such as textiles and electronic goods, as part of the new policy to develop new overseas markets to improve foreign trade.

The renewed emphasis on agriculture in the new economic policy is meant to overcome shortages in grain production that has cut food supplies and is reported to have led to local disturbances.

Some analysts believe North Korea is using the issue of nuclear inspections to win economic concessions from the west. The strategy may have been adopted by Mr. Kim Jong-il to prove his toughness to the old guard, while promoting the goals of the reformers by gaining foreign aid in return for allowing nuclear inspections.

N Korean leaders in power struggle

By John Burton in Seoul

Signs of a power struggle were evident at the latest session of the North Korean parliament held in Pyongyang late last week. The clash pits the conservative old guard affiliated to President Kim Il-sung, 81, against a younger generation of technocrats supporting Mr. Kim Jong-il, the president's son and designated successor, according to analysts.

"There is a generational conflict in this," said Mr. Adrian Foster-Carter, director of the Leeds University Korea Project. "The old guard are said to fear for their prospects once Kim Jong-il takes full charge."

A central point of dispute between the two factions is economic reform. The conservatives believe that opening the economy to foreign investment will undermine the stability of the government as North Koreans become exposed to outside influence.

But the technocrats argue the North is in danger of economic collapse if the country remains closed and sticks rigidly to the governing principle of *juche*, or self-reliance.

The reformers appeared to carry the day at the latest parliamentary session when they were given two or three years to restructure the economy, including promoting foreign trade and light industry and agriculture at the expense of heavy industry. This decision was accompanied by a report admitting the economy faced serious problems.

But to mollify the conservatives, President Kim's younger brother, once touted as a potential successor, was suddenly appointed a vice-president and politburo member after an 18-year absence. Mr. Kim Jong-ju, 71, disappeared from view in 1975 after the president's son rose to prominence and was proclaimed the next leader.

Some analysts believe Mr. Kim Jong-ju may be appointed president, while Mr. Kim Jong-il will hold the more powerful positions of general secretary of the Korean Workers' party and head of the armed forces.

"Splitting the leadership between President Kim's brother and son would represent a balancing act to appease both the conservative and reformist factions, while keeping power concentrated in the hands of the Kim family," said one analyst. President Kim has simultaneously held all three posts.

Other analysts discount speculation of the rise of Mr. Kim Jong-ju, indicating President Kim is having second thoughts about his son assuming power. Kim Jong-il still appears to be in charge of formulating policy on the economy and other issues.

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BIDS FOR CONSULTANTS FOR A WIDE BODY HANGAR AT ISLAMABAD, THE CAPITAL OF PAKISTAN

PIA, an International carrier of repute having 21 Wide body and 22 Narrow body aircrafts has ambitious plans for expanding its heavy maintenance facilities. Growth in the size of the fleet, routes and engineering complexes are all part of the plan. The first wide body hangar is already operational in Karachi and now a project is under way to construct the second at Islamabad.

The wide body hangar will include an annex incorporating avionics shops, stock rooms, power generation unit, offices and other accessories/amenities to be built on a piece of land measuring 133,444 SQ. YDS.

PIA requires a firm of Consultants who will be responsible for determining the Requirements, infrastructure of wide body hangar & its Designing, Advising on tendering and selection of contractors/builders, and supervision of the entire project till its completion.

The consulting firm must have an in-house competency in architectural, structural, E/M, HVAC, power generation and allied services/systems of the complex facilities as stated above. Past experience of designing and supervising/building of wide body hangar is a mandatory requirement.

Bids are therefore invited for the appointment of reputable consultants for providing comprehensive consultancy services for the proposed PIA Engineering Complex - wide body hangar at Islamabad airport.

Interested firms/consultants are required to send their technical & financial proposals/bids, which must also include the following information.

- Satisfactory completion certificate of similar consultancy/assignment during last 10 (ten) years.
- List of similar consultancy works in hand, with value and name of the client.
- List of key personnel, associates & affiliates anticipated to be engaged on PIA project.
- Financial stability certificate from bankers.
- Any other vital information considered necessary.
- Rate of consultancy fee for this project, together with mode of payment.

Comprehensive proposals/bids should reach at the following address by 04 Feb, 1994.

Kaleem Malik
Director General Services
Pakistan International Airlines Corporation, Karachi Airport, Karachi, Pakistan.
Phone: 92-21-4872696, 92-21-4573775 Fax: 92-21-4572677

The competent authority reserves the right to accept or reject any application without assigning any reason.

PIA
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NEWS: UK

Mayhew 'offered to quit' over Ulster letters

By David Owen
and Philip Stephens

Sir Patrick Mayhew, the Northern Ireland secretary, was ready to resign over mistakes contained in government papers giving details of secret exchanges between the government and Sinn Féin leaders.

Neither Downing Street nor the Northern Ireland Office would comment last night. The government admitted to the errors in the papers, with Sir Patrick accepting "full ministerial responsibility" for

propaganda victory earlier this month - were not his fault. They say that the papers - published last month after the government admitted it had been in contact with Provisional leaders over an extended period - were not kept at the Northern Ireland Office.

Downing Street said after Sir Patrick's original admission of government contacts with the Provisional leadership that there was no question of the Northern Ireland secretary being forced to resign.

As officials suggested he might yet hold a third meeting with Mr Reynolds as early as tomorrow, Mr Major told MPs they were seeking a declaration to end IRA terrorism.

Despite a fierce warning from Rev Ian Paisley, the Democratic Unionist leader, of a protestant backlash, Mr Major said both leaders wanted a "balanced" declaration.

Britain in brief



Major says EU follows UK agenda

Mr John Major claimed that other European Union governments had adopted Britain's agenda for economic recovery and were now endorsing policies which many had regarded as "unthinkable" a few years ago.

In an uncompromising statement in the House of Commons, the prime minister told MPs that the government had endorsed Mr Jacques Delors' plans for higher growth and employment only because "we took out the bits we rubbished".

Fixed licence for Vodafone

Vodafone, the UK's largest mobile phone network operator, has been granted a government licence to offer "fixed" services in competition with British Telecom.

However, the granting of the licence by the Department of Trade and Industry marks a significant departure in regulatory policy.

Workers on rig evacuated

More than 70 workers were evacuated from BP's Forties Delta production platform in the North Sea after an incident in the flare system. BP Exploration said there was an emergency shutdown on the platform after a suspected internal ignition in pipework. No injuries were reported.

In all 77 non-essential personnel were evacuated to emergency support vessel *Volair* - 86 people stayed on board the platform, which is 110 miles north-east of Aberdeen.

NVQs seen as a 'disaster'

Britain's new system of vocational qualifications is today attacked as a "disaster of epic proportions" in a report by a group of leading academics.

Professor Alan Smithers, of Manchester university's centre for education and employment research, said the new national vocational qualifications (NVQs) and general national vocational qualifications (GNVQs) were inferior both to the training schemes which preceded them, and to comparable courses in other European countries.

The new qualifications are weak because they are geared solely to "assessing what students can do rather than what they know or understand", he said.

Career trade unionists urged

Trade unions need to recruit young professional well paid officials, Mr Peter Wickens, personnel director of Nissan Motor Manufacturing (UK), has told the Commons Employment Committee.

Young people could be recruited from outside a union "on the basis of their ability and interest and then they can rise through the ranks by moving from one trade union to another," he said in written evidence to the committee's inquiry into the future of trade unions.

A new class of career-minded officials, he said, "should be paid salaries commensurate with those they could receive at equivalent levels on the other side of the bargaining table."

Ancient moat may be filled

The Tower of London moat may be refilled with water - 150 years after it was emptied as a health hazard.

The long-term project is being considered by the Historic Royal Palaces Agency, which took over management of the tower four years ago - although there are no immediate plans to go ahead.

The moat was built in the 13th century during the reign of Edward I.

Over the years, it came to be used as a receptacle for rubbish and Edward III, in a bid to reduce outbreaks of plague, introduced the death penalty for anyone found bathing in it.

It remained a health hazard and 150 years ago the Duke of Wellington, commander-in-chief of the armed forces, ordered it to be drained.

Lloyd's Names can sue agents

The Court of Appeal in London upheld the right of loss-making Names on the Lloyd's insurance market to sue their members' agents in a move that paves the way for a series of legal actions next year.

The decision removes one of the final barriers holding up litigation by Names - the individuals whose assets traditionally supported the insurance market - on the Gooda Walker and Fairclough syndicates.

It comes at a time when the Names are deciding whether to accept a £900m out of court settlement offered last week by Lloyd's instead of pursuing legal actions.

Mr Michael Deeny, chairman of the Gooda Walker Action Group, said: "This is a wonderful Christmas present for our members."

"We have now won on every preliminary point tried in our case."

Arms minister admits error

The minister at the heart of the arms-for-Iraq affair said that a secret change to the government's guidelines on defence exports should have been announced to parliament.

The statement to the Scott inquiry was made by Mr Alan Clark, who served first as trade and then as defence minister in the Thatcher government.

Mr Clark said that the change to the guidelines were secretly agreed by ministers in 1988 and were used by officials to approve the export of more defence equipment to Iraq.

He was in favour of announcing it to parliament, but allowed himself to be overruled by the foreign office.

Output prices steady despite exit from ERM

By Peter Marsh,
Economics Correspondent

Manufacturers have barely increased their prices since the summer, according to government figures yesterday which illustrate the weakness of inflationary pressures.

In November, prices of materials and energy bought by manufacturers were 1.8 per cent lower than 12 months earlier, the biggest yearly drop since July last year.

The figures from the Central Statistical Office underline how inflation has been falling under the influence of low demand, small increases in wage costs and a fall in the prices of many commodities such as oil.

Sterling's 10.4 per cent depreciation since Britain's exit from the exchange rate mechanism in September last year has failed to spur inflation, in spite of the consequent large increase in the cost of imports.

Prices of crude oil bought by manufacturers fell 16.2 per cent in the year to last month. Over the same period prices of UK-produced foodstuffs fell 3.3 per cent, while prices of general fuels, chemicals, metals and imported foods increased by a weak 0.6 per cent, 0.9 per cent, 0.2 per cent and 4.9 per cent respectively.

Meanwhile flat manufacturing output since the spring has underlined the weakness of the UK recovery and the depressed state of many overseas markets.

Output by manufacturing industry fell 0.2 per cent in the

The number of business failures had dropped by a third in the third quarter compared with the same period in 1992, figures from Trade Indemnity, the trade credit insurer, showed, writes Andrew Jack.

In further indications of the recovery in Britain, all regions and all industry sectors reported declines in the number of failures in the period from July to September, according to the insurer.

The total of failures and bad debts, based on reports from Trade Indemnity clients, was 1,171 against 1,780 in the third quarter last year.

The latest figures from Trade Indemnity showed an 18 per cent decline on the second quarter of this year.

Three months to October compared with the previous three months, and was at the same level as in the first quarter.

Factory output between August and October expanded by a weak 1.4 per cent compared with the corresponding period last year after vigorous 2.5 per cent year-on-year growth recorded in May.

Even so, the subdued nature of the manufacturing recovery has been offset by strong growth in energy output, which is at its highest levels for five years.

The seasonally adjusted numbers from the Central Statistical Office illustrate the difficulties faced by much of industry in building up output after the long recession.



Britain's last remaining pit ponies are to lose their jobs with the scaling down of production at Ellington Colliery, Northumberland, next March. The ponies - like the ones pictured at Sacriston Colliery near Durham - are stabled 300 feet underground and work up to seven miles out under the North Sea pulling steel girders. By spring, British Coal hopes to have found homes for all the animals.

Bank gives interest rate warning

By Peter Norman,
Economics Editor

The Bank of England yesterday gave its clearest warning yet that Britain would raise interest rates if sharp price increases by companies threatened to push inflation through the top of its target range.

Mr Rupert Pennant-Rea, the Bank's deputy governor, weighed in the debate about whether UK companies have raised margins excessively. He stressed that conditions of low inflation require different corporate policies, with bigger sales volumes rather than higher prices.

A month ago, Mr Eddie George, the Bank's governor, sparked controversy when he complained that more than half of recent increases in manufacturers' output prices in the UK came from higher margins.

The row was fuelled by Mr Kenneth Clarke, the chancellor, who said a 10 per cent increase in export prices over the past year was a "vivid reminder" that UK management prefers higher returns rather than higher volumes

when competing overseas. Yesterday, Mr Pennant-Rea denied the Bank was telling managers how to run their businesses. However, he stressed that the government's aim of keeping the 12-month change in the retail price index, excluding mortgage interest payments, within a range of 1 to 4 per cent - and in the lower half of that range by the end of this parliament - would have a powerful impact on companies' pricing policies.

"We plan to take inflation off the menu," Mr Pennant-Rea

told the City branch of the Institute of Directors. That meant no big monetary boost to pull the economy out of recession, no boom-bust cycle, and avoiding conditions that produced a big surge in wages. It meant companies would not be able to raise prices on the assumption that competitors were doing the same.

The deputy governor's warnings came against a background of disappointing industrial production figures and signs of only modest inflationary pressures from producer

Footballers prepare for second half

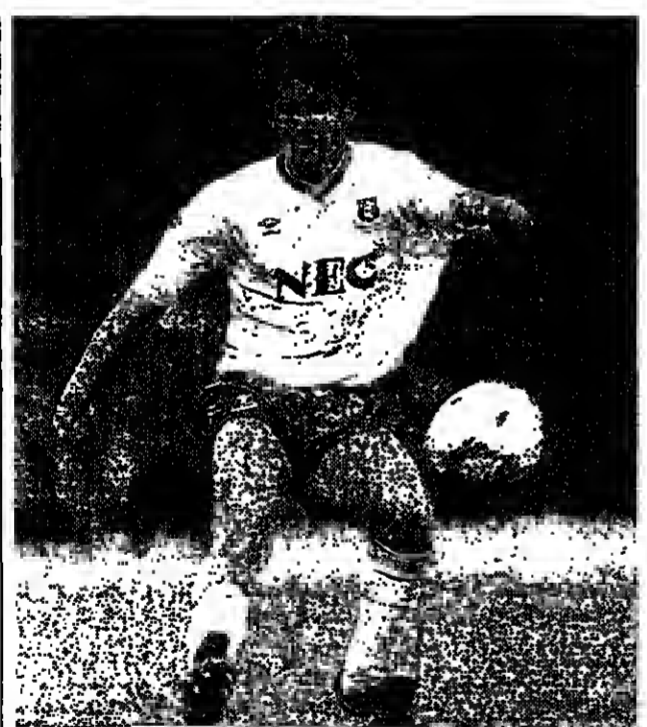
By Diane Summers,
Marketing Correspondent

Footballers who find themselves out of a job in their mid-thirties are to get the chance of a second career in marketing.

The Professional Footballers' Association, the players' union, is piloting a two-year part-time course in Warrington which will lead to a Chartered Institute of Marketing certificate.

A total of seven footballers, including Everton's Matthew Jackson and FFA executive committee member George Berry, are taking part in the pilot.

The aim is to help footballers who want to get a marketing job in sport or industry after they have stopped playing.



Everton central defender Matthew Jackson is on the PFA scheme

Legislators lobby against Thorp

By George Graham
in Washington

Legislators from Japan, the UK and the US have launched a last minute effort to persuade the British government not to allow the Thorp nuclear fuel reprocessing plant to start.

With a decision on whether to allow the Thermal Oxide Reprocessing Plant to go ahead, expected within 48 hours, 42 members of congress and parliament from the three countries wrote to Mr John Major urging the cancellation of the project.

The letter was also sent to Mr Morihiro Hosokawa, the prime minister of Japan, whose nuclear utilities are the biggest customers for Thorp's reprocessing services, and to President Bill Clinton of the US, which originally supplied

much of the fuel used in the Japanese nuclear reactors.

The start-up and continued operation of Thorp necessarily will result in a large stockpile of plutonium, contravening the stated policies of Japan and the United States," the letter says.

Thorp, which has been built in Cumbria by British Nuclear Fuels at a cost of £2.8bn, is expected to produce about 60 tons of plutonium over the next decade if a British government review allows it to start up.

Among those signing the letter are Senator Dale Bumpers, Congressman Joseph Kennedy and Congressman Pete Stark in the US. Mr Tony Benn, Mr Simon Hughes and Mr Llew Smith in the UK, and Mr Tadatoshi Akiba and Mr Tatsukuni Komori in Japan.

MPs told of fraud at British Council

By John Authers

Two frauds and a theft in the last financial year have cost the British Council more than £500,000, the House of Commons' public accounts committee was told yesterday.

Mr John Hanson, director general of the council, which operates educational services outside the UK, told the committee he "bitterly regretted" the losses, which had led the Council to abandon planned projects in several eastern European countries, as well as South Africa and Malaysia.

Sir John Bourn, the comptroller and auditor general, told the committee the biggest fraud took place last September, when £20,072 was paid in foreign currency through the electronic transfer system into overseas bank accounts of bogus suppliers, following the receipt of seven fraudulent payment vouchers by the council's banking section.

Mr Hanson told the committee the vouchers had been put into the council's computer system by an "external criminal gang". The council's banking system had not been "protected with the same barrier of controls which had been erected around the main payment system."

Mr Robert Sheldon, chairman of the committee, suggested that the vouchers "could only have been obtained from within the system", and said "there appears to be some criminal element within the body itself."

Mr Hanson admitted that the criminal gang had access to "insider information", but denied that this necessarily came from a past or present British Council employee. He said the gang could have been helped by a temporary employee or contractor.

The police had arrested and charged three people in connection with the fraud, and arrested a fourth, he said. None had ever been employed by the council. To date, only £19,761 had been recovered, he said.

Bank of England plans shake-up of management structure

By Peter Norman,
Economics Editor

The Bank of England is planning an internal restructuring that could result in its operations being grouped in two broad "wings", of which one would focus on achieving monetary stability and the other on ensuring the stability of the financial system.

Mr Eddie George, the bank governor, and its senior directors worked out the plan to replace the Bank's present tangled division of responsibilities in more than a dozen divisions and three departments at a special weekend meeting at Ashridge Management College north of London earlier this month.

The plan, which is viewed in Threadneedle Street as a separate issue from the present debate over whether to give the Bank greater

independence from the Treasury in its conduct of monetary policy, is still being thrashed out in detail.

If carried through, it will be the Bank's first significant internal restructuring since 1980. It has followed last July's change of top management when Mr George moved up from being deputy governor to governor and Mr Rupert Pennant-Rea, the former editor of *The Economist* magazine, was appointed deputy in

his place. Mr Pennant-Rea has formed a working party to handle the restructuring.

The plan to create a monetary wing responsible for price stability recognises the more explicit counter-inflationary role that has been given to the Bank since Britain was forced out of the exchange rate mechanism of the European Monetary System in September 1992. The wing would include the parts of the Bank respon-

sible for monetary operations, including the markets section, as well as some banking activities and the economic analysis division.

Banking supervision would be the main responsibility of the financial stability wing, which would also take over the Bank's duties for making the City function well. These include the non-statutory supervision of bullion and foreign exchange markets and gilt edged market mak-

ers (GEMMs) as well as its work on payments and settlements systems, stock exchange dealings systems and Lloyd's of London, the insurance market.

Officials stressed yesterday the plans were still a "strategic vision" that would be refined over the next six months. There is no intention to reorganise the Bank in one "big bang" and no time horizon for the full implementation of the ideas.

Rekindling a private interest in the UK public sector

Companies which supply contract services to public bodies have welcomed the announcement that most of the 144 government agencies, reports John Willman

testing programme have become disillusioned with a process which appeared to favour bids from the 'civil service' (the government's own administration service).

The opportunity to take over, or manage, agencies delivering central government services will be a natural step after a period of fast growth in contracting-out and outsourcing in local government and the health service.

Many companies which had bid for contracts from the government under its market-

identified for privatisation when they were created: the National Engineering Laboratory, computer centre - which handles much of the civil service payroll - and Adas, the agricultural advisory service.

Reviews are under way on privatising the Transport Research Laboratory, Companies House, the Patent Office, the Department of Trade and Industry's Accounting Services Agency and four DIT labs.

Two companies scanning the list of opportunities with particular interest are Capita and CSL, both management buy-outs from Cipla, the professional body for public-sector accountants.

Capita, which started with consultancy and computer services, now collects council tax (local government tax) and business rates for some councils and pays benefits on their behalf.

CSL employs about 700 staff supplying revenue collection, exchequer services and general financial management to public bodies. It has recently become part of Touche Ross, the accountancy firm.

Another company with a track record in supplying services to government is Serco, which specialises in defence and security work. Since 1984 it has run the ballistic missile early warning station at Fylingdales on the North Yorkshire moors, providing services from cleaning to systems maintenance.

Serco's 9,000 employees now provide services in defence, central government, local government and civil aviation in 29 countries. In the UK they run local authority leisure services, manage Hyde Park in London, maintain speed cameras on main roads and operate defence firing ranges.

Mr Richard Nicholls, Serco's marketing director, welcomed last week's initiative to open up the agencies to outside bids. "This reflects the growing interest internationally from governments which wish to concentrate their efforts and

resources on the tasks they best perform."

Agencies such as NHS Estates and the Buying Agency will be of particular interest to Mr Oliver Jones, managing director of Symonds FM, a property management company. His 880 employees currently manage property for companies opening for business in the UK, public-sector organisations and newly privatised utilities.

"Our classic client is a bureaucracy facing change," he says, "and there's no bureaucracy like the civil service."

Handwritten text in Arabic script: "مكتبة من الامارات"



Marriage bureau for business angels

The chancellor made the UK far more attractive for business angels by introducing incentives in last month's budget. But how does the business seeking finance track down this elusive and largely anonymous breed? And how does the angel know where to find suitable investments?

The answer is a marriage bureau. Hot on the tail of Kenneth Clarke's budget the British Venture Capital Association, has produced a guide to these introduction services.

Compiled by Colin Mason of Southampton University and Prof Richard Harrison of Ulster Business School, the guide says the business angel can provide the first rung on the financing ladder.

Directory of Business Introduction Services BVCA, 3 Catherine Place, London SW1E 6DX

Granville teams up with Postel

Granville, the private investment banking group, has strengthened its links with Postel, the UK's largest pension fund, and formed a joint venture to manage the two groups' private equity portfolios.

The new venture, Granville Private Equity Managers, will manage Postel's £150m private equity fund, Granville Development Capital's existing funds and an additional £50m which Postel has allocated for new investment in the next three years.

The deal is an example of the kind of consolidation that venture capital industry observers expect to see over the next 18 months. A number of venture capital groups are struggling to raise capital for new funds and thought to be seeking strategic mergers.

Postel already has a 16 per cent stake in Granville. Two Postel fund managers, John Brakell and Ray Maxwell, will move across to the new venture.

When Roger Stretch decided to buy some hi-tech laser machinery for his family-owned metal working business, he realised he would need a Department of Trade and Industry grant.

Casting aside a long-held suspicion of consultants, Stretch approached Business Link Birmingham, which he was told had become a one-stop shop supplying advice and support to business.

"I am basically using the Business Link to sort out the paper work for me and let me get on with running the business," says Stretch, managing director of Mackenzie Tools & Production, a Birmingham-based metal working company which employs 45 people.

Birmingham was the first of the Business Links to open its doors - quickly followed by Leicester and Conington - but the aim is to offer the service throughout the UK.

Within three years, the DTI hopes about 70 large and 130 smaller Business Links will be set up, all providing one port of call for businesses wanting the support services now supplied by a multitude of organisations.

To speed their development, Michael Heseltine last week increased the budget for the roll-out of the Business Link brand from £3m this financial year to £17m next year.

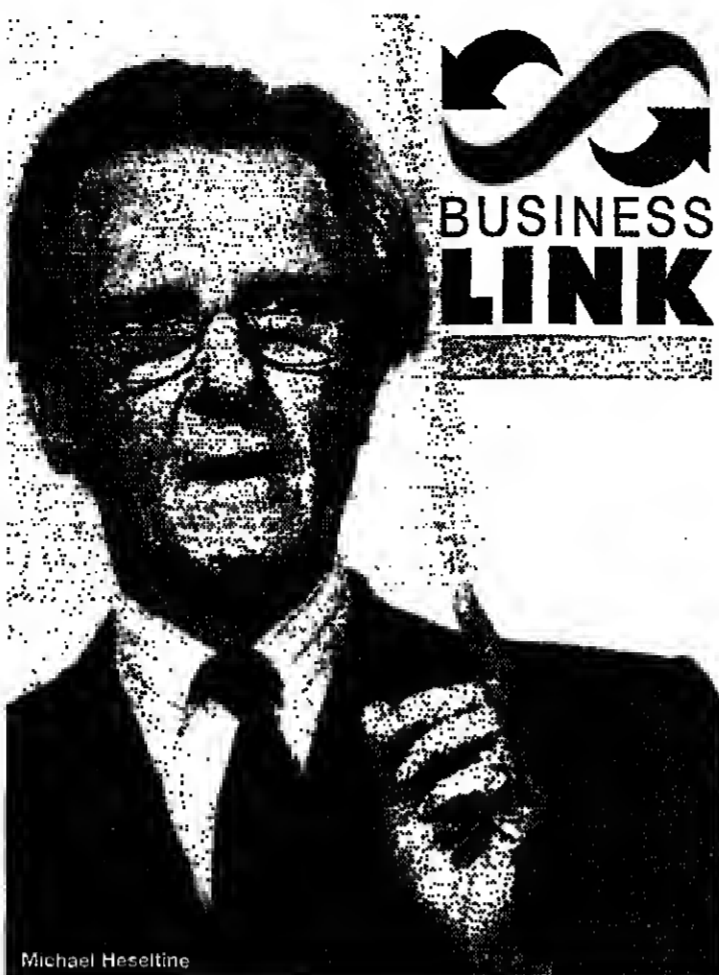
The idea of bringing the diverse sources of help for business under one roof has gained strong national support, particularly from the business community itself. That said, there are still problems to be overcome before the network extends across the country.

In theory each Business Link office is meant to be a partnership between the local Training and Enterprise Council, local authorities, chambers of commerce, enterprise agencies and the DTI, all of which provide different forms of support. All will have to subsume their identities beneath the Business Link flag.

Each Link will structure its services as it sees fit but the range will be similar. Business Link Birmingham, for example, offers advice, counselling and support covering eight areas: exporting, sales/marketing, quality, team development, property, management/finance, technology and legal/regulation.

The problem is that in some areas the chambers, Tecs and local authorities are finding the idea of forming a partnership easier than actually putting it into practice.

Some Tecs, for example, are trying to be too dominant within the partnership and are incurring the DTI's censure; in other areas chambers of commerce fear they may lose traditional sources of financial support once the Business Links become self-funding in three years.



Michael Heseltine

One-stop help shop

Richard Gourlay looks at plans to speed up the development of a UK network of advice centres

There is a lack of strong partners for the local Tecs.

One pressure that might lead to stronger partnerships is local demand from businesses for what Business Link can offer. Alun Dow, chief executive of Birmingham Business Link, is in no doubt that this demand exists. "The majority of the enquiries have been a general interest in seeing what we can do," he says.

In the first nine weeks, his switchboard received 3,800 enquiries. From these contacts his personal business advisers - in Birmingham's case a network of 55 independent consultants who behave like general practitioners - will be conducting more than 340 diagnostic reviews. They make the first contact with clients and, if necessary, refer them to specialist consultants. So far 100 Birmingham companies have been passed on in this way, they pay a fee subsidised by the Business Link for the service they subsequently receive.

Business Link support has also shifted perceptibly away from an earlier focus on the smallest companies, many of which had no realistic chance of growing. Business Link Conington, for example, is willing to support sizeable companies like Airbags International, a subsidiary of Electrolux of Sweden.

Eighteen months ago, the Conington company which makes safety airbags for Ford, Saab and BMW, was about to embark on a manufacturing programme that would increase its workforce from 30 to 200 people. It realised it needed help handling the growth in its labour force and the transition from what was effectively a research and development company. It turned to South and East Cheshire Tec - now a partner in Business Link Conington - for an investor in People programme which helps companies achieve a nationally agreed standard for training and developing staff.

"Business consultants came in to look at the company to see where we were hoping to get to and to look at the people we have employed," says Ewen Guy, Airbags' personnel manager, who was also sceptical of consultants who would not help implement their advice. "The Tec helps implement the programme; that is one of the main reasons we took the Tec route."

One danger of casting their nets this wide is that the quality of diagnosis and advice may not be maintained. There may simply be a shortage of adequately qualified consultants trained in Business Link's approach. "The personal business advisers will have to be paragons of all the virtues," says Wright. "I wonder about the sheer volume they can get through."

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How to enjoy a good grilling

James Buxton observes the start of a new business forum in Scotland

The questioning was tough. "How many deals have you lost because your prices were too high?" the electronics manufacturer was asked.

"I think about one," he replied. "That's not enough," he was told. "You're charging too little. If your prices are too low you make yourself too obvious to your competitors, who will react to put you out of business."

This exchange took place recently not in a private meeting between a managing director and his consultant but in front of about 60 businesspeople and professional advisers one evening in Glasgow. It was Scotland's first forum of this kind, aimed at encouraging the creation and growth of new businesses, and is modelled on the Enterprise Forum pioneered by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Cambridge, Massachusetts, in 1978.

The bosses of two small electronics companies each gave a 20-minute presentation, outlining their business, its history, how it worked and its strategy. Then three senior figures from the Scottish electronics industry gave a brief assessment of the company and asked hard questions.

Next, the other participants, from high tech companies, banks, accountancy firms and venture capital companies, made suggestions and asked questions. The grilling was moderated by an American facilitator.

The forum has been introduced to Scotland by a group of businesspeople and professionals inspired by an initiative of Scottish Enterprise, the development body, to improve Scotland's low rate of new company formation.

The business forum differs from other seminars and presentations in allowing young companies to bare their souls in a non-adversarial atmosphere. The chairman of the session, Peter Timms, managing director of Flexible Technology, a PCB assembler, says the aim is "to allow ambitious entrepreneurs to test their ideas and overcome the uncertainty and loneliness of running a young business."

The companies which make the presentations benefit most: they publicise their businesses, pick up

advice, make contacts and meet potential investors. But for everyone else it is still a chance to gain business, either from the presenters or from contacts made during the evening.

The first presentation was by David Milne, managing director of Wolfson Microelectronics, an Edinburgh semi-conductor company seeking to move from designing chips to supplying finished products, manufactured under contract. He had to explain to an assessor (who, unlike the rest of the audience, had studied the company in advance) what really distinguished his company from other semi-conductor producers.

The other presenter was Mike Eccles, managing director of Sunnyside Systems, employing four people in Livingston, West Lothian, which makes electronic test and measurement equipment for customers such as Rolls-Royce. One entrepreneur from the floor wondered if Sunnyside Systems was taking itself seriously enough. "You seem to have got into this almost by chance - I'm worried you might drop out of it by chance."

Assessing the forum later, Eccles said that preparing his presentation clarified his mind about the company and its strategy, and he found the comments and suggestions useful. Above all he was subsequently contacted by several potential investors and partners.

Milne found the technical critique useful but felt that one of the assessors should have been a financial expert, "to bridge the gap between financing and manufacturing." Although he was already close to securing finance for the next phase of Wolfson's development, he believes he may have made contacts at the forum who would help with the subsequent stage.

Both men appreciated meeting so many potentially useful people in a friendly and supportive atmosphere.

Where the business forum could be even more constructive - or possibly destructive - would be in assessing the business plan of a company that has only a business plan, and no track record. The next forum, in February, is scheduled to do exactly that.

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If you are a former student of UCL and would like to know more, please contact: Mike Freeman or Chris Cox in the Office of Alumni Relations, Gower Street, WC1E 6BT. Tel: 071 380 7152; Fax: 071 383 0529

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07:15 European Business Today†
12:30 FT Reports†
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TUESDAY

06:30 European Business Today†
07:15 European Business Today†
07:45 FT Reports*
12:30 West of Moscow†
Da or Nyet? We look at Yeltsin's prospects following the Russian election results.

13:15 FT Reports*
15:45 FT Reports*
18:45 FT Reports*
22:30 European Business Today†
23:45 FT Reports*

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06:30 European Business Today†
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PEOPLE

Miller/Williams five-year partnership comes to an end

John Miller, finance director of paper and packaging group David S. Smith, is leaving in mid January after the interim results, ending a five year "partnership" with Canadian-born chief executive Peter Williams.

Miller, 45, played down the reasons for his departure. "It is a great job here, and it is very difficult to explain why you do something like this without sounding smug, but occasionally you wake up in the morning and realise how ignorant you are. I'd just like a change."

He feels he has helped change the company "mostly for the good", and thinks it is "a safe time to leave". He stresses there is no falling out with Williams.

For his part, Williams

acknowledges that it is "a surprise when someone as young as John decides to move on" but goes on to stress that "there was no corporate reason. I guess if you decide your hawking is rusty and you value that..."

This is the third job in which Miller has worked closely with Williams. Both men had been veterans of Reed International, Miller since 1974, shortly after qualifying as a chartered accountant. He began reporting directly to Williams from 1987, as finance director of the European manufacturing division.

Shortly thereafter, Williams led the management buy-out of Reedpack, the paper and packaging businesses of Reed, which was then sold on to

Swedish Svenska Cellulosa, at a handsome profit, in 1990. Miller joined him as Reedpack's finance director, picking up around an estimated £2m from the proceeds of the buy-out.

He is replaced by David S. Smith by David Butfield, the financial controller, also a Reedpack man. "I want to make clear this is not just jobs for the Reedpack boys," says Miller. "We did do a proper outside search."

Meanwhile, the outgoing finance director has yet to decide how to repair his "ignorance", but would consider anything from "positions elsewhere in industry not necessarily as finance director" to spending a year studying fine art at the Courtauld Institute.

Non-executive directors

■ Bert Magnusson, chairman of NCC AB, at BURMAH CASTROL.

■ Sir Julian Oswald, former First Sea Lord, and Amaury-Daniel de Sese, a member of the management boards of Compagnie Financière de Paribas and Banque Paribas, at SEMA GROUP.

■ Bill Morrison, recently retired as deputy senior partner of KPMG Peat Marwick, at BRITISH LINEN BANK.

■ Kevin O'Sullivan, financial director of Greenore, as chairman at KEW GROUP.

■ Greg Paskos, retired president of the Whitaker Corporation, at COOKSON GROUP.

■ Alfonso Pastore has resigned from BRAZILIAN INVESTMENT TRUST.

■ James Blood, senior partner of Woolley Beardsleys &



Bosworth, at BREEDON.

■ Sir James Birrell (above left), former chief executive of the Halifax Building Society, at WESLEYAN ASSURANCE SOCIETY.

■ Michael Foster (above right), executive chairman of Courage, at GEEST; Leonard van Geest has resigned.

■ Michael Smith, senior partner of Titmuss Sainer & Webb, at CATER ALLEN Syndicate Management.

■ Colin Butler has resigned from MOTOR WORLD GROUP.

■ Michael Butler at EDINBURGH FUND MANAGERS; Sir Colin Barker and Paul Whitney have resigned.

■ Peter Cawdron, strategy development director of GrandMet, at COMPASS GROUP.

■ Michael Buckley, head of investment banking at AIB Capital Markets, at THE FIRST IRELAND INVESTMENT COMPANY on the resignation of Tom Mulcahy, AIB's chief executive.

■ Robin Singer has resigned from JIB GROUP.

■ The Rt Hon Archie Hamilton MP at THE WOODGATE FARMS DAIRY.

Movement at Midland

Unilever executive director Charles Miller Smith, who was in the running for the chief executive's job at Barclays Bank, has finally found a seat in a clearing bank boardroom. He has been appointed a non-executive director of Midland Bank, the UK arm of HSBC Holdings.

Miller Smith, 54, is a main board director of Unilever where he has executive responsibility for food activities in Southern Europe. He is thought to be one of the two front-runners to take over the

chairmanship of the British arm of Unilever when the current incumbent, Mike Perry, retires in about three years' time.

Miller Smith, who is also a non-executive director of ICI, replaces Charles Mackay, chief executive of Inchope, who joined the Midland board in November 1992. Mackay, 63, will continue as a non-executive director of Midland's parent HSBC Holdings.

Meanwhile, John Skae, 57, Midland's company secretary since 1985, retires at the end of the year. Ralph Skae, 42, HSBC's company secretary, will assume the additional responsibility as company secretary of Midland Bank.

Herbert retires from Tussauds

Michael Herbert, who joined the Madame Tussauds waxworks when there were still Tussauds in the business, is retiring after 18 years as chief executive of Tussauds, which is part of Pearson, owner of the Financial Times.

Herbert, who will retire on April 30 1994 at the age of 60, has overseen Tussauds' growth into the UK's leading commercial operator of leisure attractions visited by over 8m visitors a year.

Apart from Madame Tussauds, the group now includes Alton Towers and Warwick Castle which rank among the UK's top ten visitor attractions.

When Herbert joined Tussauds in 1967, as its first

successor is that it has never made any attempt to call itself a museum. "We are in the entertainment business," says Herbert, who believes that this approach has helped Madame Tussauds, in particular, survive periodic threats from rival attractions ranging from the advent of cinema to the hologram.

He will be succeeded by Michael Jolly, 41, Tussauds' chief operating officer, who joined the group in 1983 after working on the marketing side of Cadbury Schweppes.

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Not a matter for national discretion



The European Medicines Directive leaves no discretion to member countries when deciding whether to suspend or withdraw a particular product, the European Court of Justice ruled last week.

The decision was made on a preliminary reference from the Italian State Council. The Italian health minister had declared authorisations for certain medicinal products invalid under an Italian law, which allowed him to do so when products authorised for sale were not put on the market within 18 months.

Under European law, medicinal products are subject to a number of directives aimed at progressively establishing the free movement of such goods throughout the European Union, while ensuring that public health is protected. The directives lay down rules on public health grounds for the suspension or withdrawal of authorisations for such products. It is also clearly stated that such rules are exhaustive.

The Court therefore had little difficulty in deciding that there was no discretion which could be exercised by the national authorities in this area.

The Court was also asked to rule whether a national law which allowed authorisations to be declared invalid rather than suspended or withdrawn was also contrary to European law. The Italian government argued that declarations of invalidity were different from measures of withdrawal or suspension and thus member states were not limited in their use of the former by the terms of a directive which only dealt with the latter.

The Court agreed that declarations of invalidity were different from measures of withdrawal but held that their effect was the same - to annul an existing authorisation. The Court also said that the present framework established by the relevant directives would be affected if member states were allowed to use ways of annulling authorisations other than those set out in the directives.

C-89/92: *Piarel SpA o Ministero della Sanità, ECJ 5CB, December 7, 1993.*

Initiation of dumping review requires sufficient evidence

The European Commission must have sufficient evidence of the dumping of goods and the injury caused before initiating a review of anti-dumping measures, the European Court ruled last week.

The case related to the imposition of definitive anti-dumping duties on a Brazilian exporter at the conclusion of a review. The problem arose because in the original proceedings four years earlier, the Brazilian exporter had been cleared of dumping.

The evidence which the Commission took into account when deciding to initiate the review did not include evidence of dumping by that exporter.

The Commission argued that it was not necessary to adduce sufficient evidence of dumping and injury before initiating review proceedings as the original proceedings, for which such evidence was necessary, had not been closed. All that was necessary was evidence of changed circumstances to justify a review.

The Court said procedural rules for reviews made it clear that sufficient evidence had to be adduced before initiating such proceedings. It then said, however, it was not necessary for the evidence to relate to dumping on the part of each of the undertakings concerned as anti-dumping proceedings relate in principle to all imports of a certain category of products from a third country, not to imports of products manufactured by specific companies.

The Court said the Commission had relied on two pieces of evidence. First, evidence provided by exporters who had been subject to anti-dumping duties that their exports were no longer being dumped and that the Community industry therefore no longer suffered material injury. Second, evidence that there was overcapacity in the product market which had brought about a substantial fall in prices in the Community.

The Court ruled that neither piece of evidence amounted to sufficient evidence of dumping to justify a review.

C-216/91: *Rima Electrometallurgia SA v Council and Commission, ECJ 5CB, December 7, 1993.*

BRICK COURT CHAMBERS, BRUSSELS

It has taken almost 15 years of pressure and wrangling but the Bar's 200-year monopoly on advocacy in the higher courts has finally been broken.

Last week, Lord Mackay, the Lord Chancellor, and England's four most senior judges approved the Law Society's application for wider rights for solicitors in private practice in England and Wales. The move will allow solicitors to represent their clients in court - at present they are confined to magistrates' court and county court advocacy.

The big City law firms have been quietly getting ready for High Court advocacy, and the decision marks the start of an intense period of training to prepare advocates for the challenge. It also puts an end to the increasingly redundant notion that solicitors are mere general practitioners and that it is barristers who are the true specialists.

The decision also represents a personal triumph for Lord Mackay. Rights of audience for solicitors formed the central plank of what he had promised in 1986 would be "the biggest shake-up of the legal profession this century".

The shake-up has taken longer than he hoped, but he has survived the hyperbole and at times intense hostility to his plans from the Bar and judiciary. Whatever the Bar may say, this one measure will, over time, change the practice of law in England and Wales irrevocably.

But perhaps those with the biggest cause to celebrate are the clients, particularly international clients of City law firms, many of whom have never understood why the person who knows their case backwards has to hand it over to someone else to present in court.

Mr David Fraser, a litigation partner of Baker & McKenzie, the world's biggest law firm, says US clients accept the English system (there is an element of a two-tier system in the US), but there is a resistance to paying for an outsider to enter the loop at a late stage.

In future clients should benefit from a reduction in the cost of litigating, and from greater choice and flexibility in the way their cases are handled.

This can only boost London's position as a centre of commercial litigation and increase the already significant contribution of more than £400m which international commercial litigation makes to Britain's invisible earnings.

Mr John Trotter, a senior litigation partner at City solicitors Lovell White Durrant, says the cost savings will depend on the nature of the individual case.

If there remains a need for someone to take the solicitor's traditional role of back-up and support to counsel, the savings from having

Benefits of the Bar's broken monopoly

Robert Rice looks at the effects of last week's decision to extend rights of audience in the High Court to solicitors

a solicitor as opposed to a barrister doing the advocacy may not be large. The main savings are likely to come from not having to inform counsel about a case at a late stage and from avoiding the Bar's "brief fee" system, he says.

At present barristers' fees for a case are made up of a "brief fee", a form of retainer for taking on a case, and a daily fee or "refresher", for each day spent in court.

For a commercial trial estimated to last four weeks, the brief fee could be as much as £30,000 to £40,000. If the case settles after two days, the barrister loses only the daily refresher.

The Bar's justification for this system is that barristers have to be paid for preparatory work carried out on a case and for the time blocked out in their diaries for the possible duration of the case. If a case settles after two days, the barrister could be left twiddling his thumbs for three and a half weeks.

Commercial clients will not agree to pay solicitor advocates a brief fee, says Mr Trotter. The advocacy element of the case will be charged on a time basis, so that, if the case settles after two days, the client will only pay for two days. This should produce substantial savings, he says.

The Bar says that using solicitor advocates will be more, rather than less, expensive. It believes that solicitors' considerably higher overheads will make it impossible for them to compete on cost.

This is one of the main reasons why the Commercial Bar, in particular, is not overly concerned by solicitors gaining rights of audience.

Mr Julian Wilson, a litigation partner at City solicitors Herbert Smith, believes solicitors can compete effectively on cost in spite of higher overheads.

First, cost savings can be made by removing the duplication of effort in briefing a barrister. Second, solicitors are now more competitive on price - the recession has put enormous downward pressure on solicitors' fees, which the Commercial Bar has been sheltered from.

Most solicitors agree, however, that solicitor advocates will not appear in the High Court overnight. It will be an evolutionary process,



The two-tier system in Britain's legal profession is set to come to an end

because of the hoops they must jump through to qualify for a High Court advocacy certificate.

Solicitors will have to show a degree of "relevant" advocacy experience. The big unknown is how the Law Society will interpret the rules about what is and what is not relevant experience.

At the moment the rules suggest that experience in arbitrations and

before tribunals, applications before a judge in chambers, and experience gained in the High Court instructing and working with barristers will all count.

The rules also suggest solicitors will have to show experience of formal advocacy in court. This is likely to mean advocacy in the county court, where solicitors already have automatic rights of audience. This

could present a problem for City law firms, because they do not do much county court work.

The irony, says Mr Wilson, is that under the rules as they stand the high-street solicitors who do the vast bulk of county court advocacy work and may not want to do High Court advocacy will find it easier to qualify for a High Court advocacy certificate than solicitors with the most experience of the High Court.

Mr Wilson hopes that in county court cases, where high-street solicitors would normally brief a barrister, they will in future refer county court advocacy work to City law firms.

The resulting increased competition for county court advocacy would benefit clients by leading to improvements in efficiency and lower prices.

There are plans to set up a commercial county court for central London next summer with a jurisdiction of £50,000 - until recently, claims above £5,000 went to the High Court. The new London county court would provide a valuable training ground for the City firms.

The firms are under no illusions, however. They know that gaining enough county court work for their solicitor advocates will be difficult, particularly if, as Mr Trotter points out, each solicitor has to show experience of 20-25 court appearances a year for two years to obtain the certificate.

In spite of these obstacles, the big City firms are determined to train their solicitors to become advocates to offer clients a modern, all-round commercial litigation service.

How much High Court advocacy do they expect to do? Mr Wilson would not like to hazard a guess, but it will be many years before the majority of Herbert Smith's advocacy requirements can be met in-house, he says.

Mr Trotter is also reluctant to be drawn, but would not be surprised if, in 10 years, Lovells is doing between 30-50 per cent of its own High Court advocacy.

So it seems there will always be a need for a Commercial Bar, albeit a slimmed-down one.

The problem for the Bar is that its training ground for the next generation of barristers appears to be rapidly disappearing. City solicitors doing county court work and high-street solicitors beginning to compete for Crown Court advocacy will mean less work for junior barristers to cut their teeth on.

And if Crown Prosecution Service lawyers get the right to prosecute in Crown Court trials, there may no longer be enough work for junior barristers to enable the independent Bar to survive.



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TECHNOLOGY



COMPANY SNAPSHOT

Nature of business: London Underground serves the London region with a network of 273 stations, 10 lines and 254 miles of track, providing 2.5m passenger journeys daily. Investment in new projects such as the Jubilee Line extension to Docklands (£1.8bn) takes place against a struggle to maintain an ageing infrastructure.

Employees: 17,000

Turnover: During 1992-93, income was £842m, with operating costs of £592m. It has a lower investment by government than any other underground railway in the world: £37m this year for the entire London transport network including buses and Tube.

Key personnel: Dennis Tunnicliffe, managing director; Alan Watkins, chairman; Nick Agnew, revenue support manager; David Field, AFC engineer; Peter Cruickshank, AFC software manager.

TECHNOLOGY FILE

Software: The Divorced System was written in six months using the Cognos fourth-generation language PowerHouse and Digital's Rob database. Explained as Diverse Integration and Verification of Revenue Collection Electronic Data, its name really derives from the Romance revenue system it replaces: an application written in Pick Basic and running on two Fujitsu minicomputers. Rob is used for the "base data" on fares. Hardware: The Fujitsus are being replaced by a two-node cluster of Digital Equipment 4000/300 Vax minicomputers under the VMS operating system version 5.5. These were installed in July 1992 to upgrade the Data Gathering Centre, which collects real-time data from stations. Supplier: Cognos, a US software house with a UK office in Bracknell, won the business on the basis of a benchmark race that included databases from Oracle, Ingres and Digital, administered by an independent consultant, Wokingham-based LSI.

Other systems: Existing operational systems use a mixture of hardware including old Digital PDP-11s, used for station simulation. There is a PDP-11 at most Tube stations: 274 installed at 249 stations, supporting 2,500 devices such as Poms and Toms (see Buzzwords), and the gates themselves.

Cost: For the software alone the cost was £115,000 (with extra hardware accounting for £75,000, the cheapest of all possible solutions by about 30 per cent. Development was done in-house by Peter Cruickshank's team. Total project cost is estimated at £360,000.

You can lie," say the Underground posters, "but your ticket can't". The magnetic strip on the back of the Tube ticket holds a wealth of information used in Automatic Fare Collection (AFC). Often crumpled to the point of extinction, the card is actually a vital engineering component in London Underground's efforts to protect its revenue.

Fraud on the Tube is estimated at £30m annually. The ticket is not just proof of a contract to travel: it can prove where and when in the system you travelled. Already, it is used to claim refunds on delayed journeys. In the future it could provide discounts and "stored value" credit.

Like the rest of the Underground, ticket technology is straitjacketed by the legacy of the past, and every investment has to be viewed with an eye to the future. This month, a new system goes into full operation which puts into place the basis for future management of fares. Called Divorced (mostly because the old system it replaces is known as Romance), it speeds up financial reporting and provides the vital ticket-derived information used in fraud detection. During tests it helped to estimate lost revenue during the recent power cuts, including refunded fares for 20,000 delayed travellers.

David Field, the AFC engineer for London Underground enjoys a challenge, which is just as well. Keeping the Tube running on its worn-out tracks with ancient trains and a dodgy power supply might be thought challenging enough. "We have this underlying belief that you can keep things working for 60 years and more. And you can, if you spend money at the right time."

Field specialises in introducing new technology into this scenario at minimum cost and disruption. He is responsible for both the "heavy metal" end of AFC, the automatic ticket-vending machines, the gates themselves (once dubbed "Rottweilers"), and the hardware and software underpinning them.

He sums up AFC's role succinctly. "Reducing costs while improving service is what we do - freeing money for other things." In information technology, he looks to spend the absolute minimum, and he wants "building blocks" that will contribute to future plans.

Field's customers are not those careless commuters who jam crumpled tickets in his high-technology gates, but the accountants in the London Underground revenue office. Automation started in 1964, with the first machine at Acton, west London. Much of the equipment replaced by the gates originated in the 1950s, and it took until 1987 to complete the process. When Field came to London Underground in 1985, the ticketing system was

Claire Gooding looks at London Underground's new system for the management of fares in a series on getting the most out of software

A revolutionary ticket to ride

SOFTWARE AT WORK

already specified and he had to implement it. Stations built in the last century cannot always be adapted for automatic gating, but they can all be connected to a central computer, and most can benefit from passenger-operated ticket issuing machines. These, and the Ticket

could be recharged with cash, and automatically debited on buses and taxis as well as the Tube. Field is only too aware of the practical implications of extending such a system to the entire transport network.

The project is currently out to tender and would need an investment of tens of millions of pounds. Every station would need validation, and tickets would need a machine-readable unique identifier, technically quite easy to add to the current numbering system. Most of

BUZZWORDS

PUBLIC OPERATED MACHINES (Poms) are automatic ticket-issuing machines which include Few Fare Machines and Multi-Fare Machines. The Poms report automatically to a control centre, which is monitored 24 hours a day.

TICKET OFFICE MACHINES (Toms) are operated by the clerk.

Office Machines (Toms) behind the counter are linked to a central system which feeds real-time operational and maintenance systems as well as revenue-tracking.

Field takes a global view of what is possible in public transport, fuelled by his seven years' experience in the Hong Kong Mass Transit system, which was built from scratch and completed in 1979. One of his dream tickets is the idea of "stored value" already used in Washington DC. A re-usable smart card, resembling a credit card,

the information is already there, partly because of information systems that have paved the way to future developments.

"I managed to convince the management that a holistic approach was essential," says Field. "It became obvious that, like everything else, the computer system was wearing out."

The target was to show revenue within 24 hours. But, as Field explains: "Under the old system, if you buy your ticket at 8am on Monday, that doesn't show on the revenue

CONSULTANT'S CRITIQUE

David Field, the AFC engineer, reminded me of the poor marine engineer who appears in disaster films - up to his chest in water while the passengers wait on the deck above. Many of the systems he is using are obsolete. This is bad news for everyone except a few contract programmers. They are able to cash in on the rarity value of their skills and charge a premium - often twice the going rate.

It is true that whatever decision you make about computer strategy could be wrong. London Underground

chose Pick as the basis of its systems. At the time, it looked to have advantages over systems such as Unix. Often, blind chance seems to decree which will be the swim and which the turkey.

For this reason, companies must remain flexible in their IT strategy. Those that declare that open systems are the only way forward may be left in the wake of the Windows NT rush. Technicians are fond of declaring which is the best operating system but that often has little to do with its success or failure in the market.

I saw one chap at the Underground copying data manually from one screen to another all day. The two systems were unable to talk to each other. It was a depressing sight - human beings were never meant for such drudgery. Planned enhancements to Divorced will free him for more productive work.

The Underground seems plagued with such incompatibility - the old Romance system passes data between two systems on magnetic tapes. The format used is common to neither

system. One computer converts data into that format then the other converts it back.

I feel that the benefits put forward are a long way from real management information. While the old system was horrendous, the new one is in danger of standing in isolation.

It is essential that any IT strategy embrace all the aims of the company rather than taking a parochial view.

Kevin Grumball
The author is a consultant at Software Design and Construction, of Milton Keynes



Heavy metal: David Field aims to cut costs while improving service

requests were becoming common, as Peter Cruickshank, the AFC software manager, explains. "There was a continuous flow of requests from the network planning office about the types of ticket sold, and so on. The Romance system would have needed major updates to cater for them."

Cruickshank's previous experience with fourth-generation languages (4GL) suggested that a 4GL might provide a low-cost solution.

This would allow flexibility for end users, and provide a platform for future developments. Performance as well as ease of use was important. After rigorous benchmarking, the AFC department selected PowerHouse, from Cognos. As ever, the specification did not stand still: "standard" reports mushroomed from 20 to 60, and new ideas were adopted during development.

A daily user of the system, and now manager of Divorced, end-user Mike Dennis of the revenue office worked closely with the developers. His swift demonstration shows how the system can now track the 700,000 daily ticket sales, showing everything from the throughput of particular gates, to excess fares, car-park takings and a detailed report on a ticket issued the day before. "It took six months to get to what we have now, and it does far more than we originally specified." That flexibility has been the main benefit of using a 4GL, says Dennis.

Apart from penalties and refunds, existing complex fares will become more innovative, using timings and zones for discounts. In effect, London Underground has all the information in place for a revolutionary approach to fares.

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New broadband technology will support the telecom services of the future

News of planned mergers and takeovers involving telephone companies, cable TV operators and entertainment companies has drawn public attention to some of the exciting telecommunications possibilities of the future. Ericsson has the broadband technology to make them happen.



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The term "broadband" signifies any bandwidths higher than 2 Mbits.

Multimedia services

The services available from these broadband networks will change the shape of telecommunications - in the office, in the factory, and at home.

It's the business sector that is most interested in broadband communications, particularly in the potential of multimedia services that combine video, speech and data.

And as broadband technology draws together the telecoms, entertainment, publishing and consumer electronics industries into new ventures, new mass-market entertainment and information services such as Video On Demand will become widely available.

Convergence system

These future services have moved one step closer with the recent announcement by Ericsson of a new system designed to be the cornerstone of new broadband network infrastructures.

Using the Ericsson ATM Broadband system, network operators will be able to build flexible, economic networks to support all future broadband services. ATM (Asynchronous Transfer Mode) is the international standard for broadband communications.

The Ericsson ATM Broadband system uses state-of-the-art hardware and software technology for maximum flexibility.

A modular, scalable system structure means broadband nodes of virtually any type and size can be built, for public and corporate networks.

Network evolution

The many users of Ericsson switching and transport products such as AXE, MD110, ETNA and Etipax will be able to introduce broadband capabilities into their existing networks as part of a step-by-step evolution to broadband.

This ATM Broadband system is the latest result of Ericsson's large-scale R&D programme. It draws on the results of the company's participation in the European RACE research programme, as well as bodies such as the ATM Forum.

The broadband system has already been selected by telecom operators for ATM pilot projects in several countries.

Two unique Ericsson concepts

The Ericsson ATM broadband system uses two unique concepts: the ATM Pipe Switch, and the Generic Broadband Module.

The ATM Pipe Switch is a general-purpose ATM switch, with a modular design that allows virtually any type and size of broadband switch to be built up from just two key integrated circuits.

The Generic Broadband Module is the basic platform used for ATM multiplexers, crossconnects, concentrators and switches.

Ericsson acquires Teli group in Sweden

Ericsson has reached agreement with the Swedish PTT, Teli, to acquire Teli AB and most of the companies in the Teli group.

Teli has around 1,800 employees engaged in the development, production and marketing of telecommunications products and services. That includes making most of the AXE exchanges for the Swedish networks.

About 1,350 of Teli's employees are in companies to be acquired by Ericsson, accounting for sales in 1992 of approximately SEK 1.4 billion.

Teli's decision to dispose of its Teli subsidiary follows a review of the company's priorities. We have concluded that we shall focus more intensively on providing services, nationally and internationally, and withdraw from the

manufacturing area," explained Tony Hagström, Teli's CEO. "It seemed natural to seek a solution in cooperation with our partner at Ericsson."

The companies also announced an SEK 1 billion order to supply AXE exchanges for Teli's Swedish public network. Orders for additional deliveries are expected in the future, and the agreement remains in effect through 1997.

BusinessPhone division moves to Austria

Development, manufacture and worldwide marketing of Ericsson's range of telephone systems for smaller businesses, BusinessPhone, is moving from Sweden to Austria during 1994/5. The business unit is to be incorporated into Schrack Telecom AG in Vienna, a member of the Ericsson group.

There will be no change to the overall direction of BusinessPhone activities, which since launch in 1990 have seen sales growth of 60%. Continued sales growth is forecast.

The move is consistent with Ericsson's strategy of technology transfer. It will also

take the company closer to the emerging East European markets for business communications equipment. Schrack Telecom, with 1,900 employees, has sales subsidiaries in the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and the Slovak Republic.

80% sales increase confirms radio communications as Ericsson's fastest-growing business area

Ericsson's financial results for the nine months ended 30th September 1993 show order bookings up by 30% over the corresponding period of 1992, at SEK 49,210 million. Consolidated net sales were 41% higher at SEK 42,415 million. Consolidated pre-tax income for the period improved to SEK 1,855 million.

Commenting on the results, Lars Ramqvist, Ericsson's CEO, said, "With regard to the development trend for the full year 1993, I can state that nothing has changed the optimism I expressed following the presentation of the six-

month report, for the entire year 1993 is expected to be somewhat more than double compared with 1992."

All of the company's business areas contributed to the increase in net sales and income. Strongest growth came from radio communications activities, which showed a net sales increase of more than 80%.

The USA is currently Ericsson's largest market, followed by Italy, Sweden and the UK. Doubling of sales to China has made it Ericsson's fifth largest market.

Mobile goes global via satellite

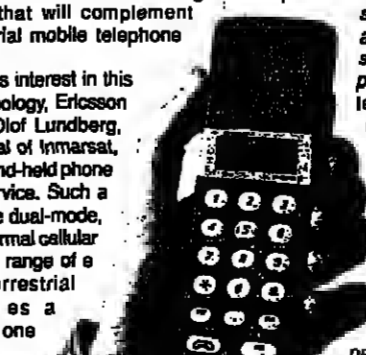
By the turn of the century, the imminent consortium expects to be using its advanced satellite system as the basis of a global digital telephone service with hand-held terminals. It's an exciting development that will complement today's terrestrial mobile telephone services.

Signalling its interest in this emerging technology, Ericsson presented to Olof Lundberg, Director General of Immsat, a model of a hand-held phone for the new service. Such a phone would be dual-mode, working as a normal cellular phone when in range of a competitive terrestrial satellite, and as a satellite phone when not.

First DECT-standard cordless system

The Ericsson cordless business telephone system, Freeset, is the first large-scale cordless PBX system to conform to the new DECT (Digital European Cordless Telecommunication) standard. Freeset can be added to any PBX to support up to 600 of these pocket-sized, cordless terminals, in addition to wired extensions.

PTT Telecom Netherlands has become the first PTT to distribute the Freeset system, and will market it in the Netherlands under the name Vox Cordless Freeset.



DECT Freeset handset

World round-up

Netherlands: Ericsson is to supply to PTT Telecom Netherlands a nationwide paging system as part of the pan-European ERMES network. Out of the eight countries so far to have placed ERMES system orders, seven have chosen Ericsson technology.

Poland: In a contract worth more than SEK 600 million over the next six years, the Ministry of Foreign Economic Relations has chosen Ericsson, in cooperation with GZE Unimor, to supply a new generation of radio relay equipment for Polish despatch.

Russia: Ericsson has signed two important contracts in the Russian Republic of Bashkortostan. One is for an AXE system for local and transit traffic. The other is for a mobile telephone network. Ericsson has already supplied mobile networks in Moscow and St Petersburg.

China: In the third quarter of 1993, Ericsson received contracts totalling SEK 216 million for AXE equipment to extend the telecoms network in Guangzhou province.

Portugal: Teliel has placed orders worth SEK 500 million for Ericsson equipment (including hand-held terminals) to increase the coverage and expand the capacity of its GSM digital mobile telephone network.

Spain & Sweden: Ericsson has been selected to supply ATM-switching nodes for broadband trials being planned in Spain by Telefonos and in Sweden by Teli in 1994.

Australia: Ericsson has become the dominant supplier of mobile telephone network equipment in Australia, following receipt of an SEK 450 million extension order from Telecom Australia. This latest order will put Ericsson GSM digital mobile technology in all Australian mainland capital cities.

USA: Ericsson GE is to supply RACOM Corporation with an EDACS digital private radio network covering over 200 sites in Iowa, Minnesota and Nebraska, as well as parts of South Dakota, Wisconsin, Illinois and Missouri.

Meanwhile, Ericsson's position in the digital cellular market continues to grow. By the end of 1993, the company expects that its TDMA systems will be serving some 100,000 digital cellular subscribers in 33 markets throughout North America.

Telefonaktiebolaget LM Ericsson, S-126 25, Stockholm, Sweden.

Ericsson's 70,000 employees are active in more than 100 countries. Their combined experience in switching, radio and networking makes Ericsson a world leader in telecommunications.

مكتبة العصر

Concert 'Ritual Fragment', Mahler's Tenth

On Sunday Mark Wigglesworth conducted the London Philharmonic - except in Harrison Birtwistle's *Ritual Fragment*, which needs no conductor. That was one of the many elegies, or "in memoriams", composed for the late Michael Nyman, artistic director of the London Sinfonietta, and it has been well. All of the performers whose instruments are portable take their turns at a central music-stand, one by one, laying their own melodic wreaths over soft background commentary and funeral tracks on a bass drum.

If the LPO players are less used than the Sinfonietta team to playing while processing, they went through their pieces with unruffled gravity. The piece wrought its proper spell. Birtwistle is now the LPO's "composer in residence", and the *Ritual Fragment* had been used in an Education Project. Before the concert proper, we heard three school groups delivering pre-improvised music inspired by it - or so we were told - except for one excursion into jazz, it seemed shapely stuff. Birtwistle's ideas are inimitable, least of all by children.

In Mozart's *Sinfonia Concertante K.364*, the great violin-and-violon one, there was no special creative input from the orchestra, though Wigglesworth handled it with an agreeably light touch. That was enough, for Thomas Zehetmair and Tobias Zimmermann were a winning pair of soloists, his subtle, fine-drawn line beautifully answered by her broad, mellifluous tone. Their partnership was seamless; probably it hardly matters to them what the accompanying orchestra does, as long as it doesn't get in the way.

As his own showpiece, however, Wigglesworth had chosen the Tenth Symphony of Mahler, in Deryck Cooke's reconstruction. It seemed well-studied, at least - indeed, it might have served as a kind of study-performance: all the notes were there, efficiently regimented and clear. There was nothing else to recommend it.

Rigor mortis set in almost from the start, with the conductor's extraordinarily unyielding tempi denying Mahler's long, anguished lines any room to breathe. New thematic material arrived as if on a conveyor belt, with no sense of event or fresh feeling. As an experiment in playing Mahler without expressive, idiomatic rubato, one hopes never to hear it repeated. Even the scherzo-movements were stiff, and the Adagio at the start and the close were frigid. The famous oncries were loud, but empty of dramatic force. Surely it must be a mistake for any conductor to essay this fragmented Tenth before mastering a lot of earlier Mahler? It made a weirdly dispiriting experience.

David Murray

Classical in question Lynn MacRitchie visits exhibitions in Leeds and Halifax

A visit to the handsome public galleries of Leeds this December or January can be recommended as offering stimulating food for thought. The Henry Moore Institute ends this year and begins the next showing the work of four European sculptors, and is also, at its sculpture studios at Dean Clough in Halifax, offering the opportunity to experience one of the more experimental works of the American artist James Turrell.

Those who wish to see *Gas Works: A Ganzfeld Sphere* - a chamber in which one viewer, at a time is exposed to the effects of red and blue neon and white strobe lights - must act quickly; it closes on December 20. The sphere offers not so much an aesthetic experience as a lesson in perception - the changing colours and psychedelic patterns experienced inside are created not on its smooth white dome but on the retina of the beholder, as each individual reacts to the flashing lights. It also offers an insight into the kind of obsessive interests (Turrell plans to revisit the piece at the end of the show to continue his light experiments) which can eventually bring about completely realised works of art.

The four works in the show at the Henry Moore Institute are all very different: two have been made especially for the exhibition, two have not. *Sea of Sun*, a maze of metal chains created by the English artist Andrew Sabin, was first exhibited at the end of 1992 at the Battersea Arts Centre in London. The effect of pushing through the series of rectangles he has created from hanging painted steel chains is indeed like plunging into sun dappled water, the coloured images, visible through each other, ever shifting and never quite resolved. Some of the chain screens are covered with abstract patterns, some with single faces,

some with buildings or landscapes. Viewing them is rather like recalling a dream, trying to catch hold of that one half-remembered scene which will unlock the meaning of all the rest.

The Spanish sculptor Jaume Plensa likes his metal traditional, although with a post modern twist. He has used iron casts of iron-casting huckers as the unit of construction of *La Neige Rouge*, 1991, a hollow rectangle made from one hundred buckets piled up and facing inward. The lips of the buckets are threaded with orange neon elements. Standing inside the rectangle in the buzzing orange glow is like standing inside heat, being made molten by colour alone.

Vittorio Messina, originally trained as an architect in Rome, made *Confini d'Occidente*, 1993, especially for the exhibition. Using only ready made industrial materials - breeze blocks, neon strips, pieces of wood, carpeting, metal shelves, sanitary ware and an anatomical skeleton - he has created a shabby temple, its structure and form recalling the classical monuments of ancient Greece. Their reprise in these humdrum materials sets off a dialectic between the forms of the past which we so revere and the utilitarian functions of ordinary buildings, so often reviled. Being forced to look at these brutal staples of our everyday lives, assembled in a manner which consciously evokes the past, serves to remind us that history is made now, too, in similarly unimpressive settings, even when, as busy participants, we fail to notice.

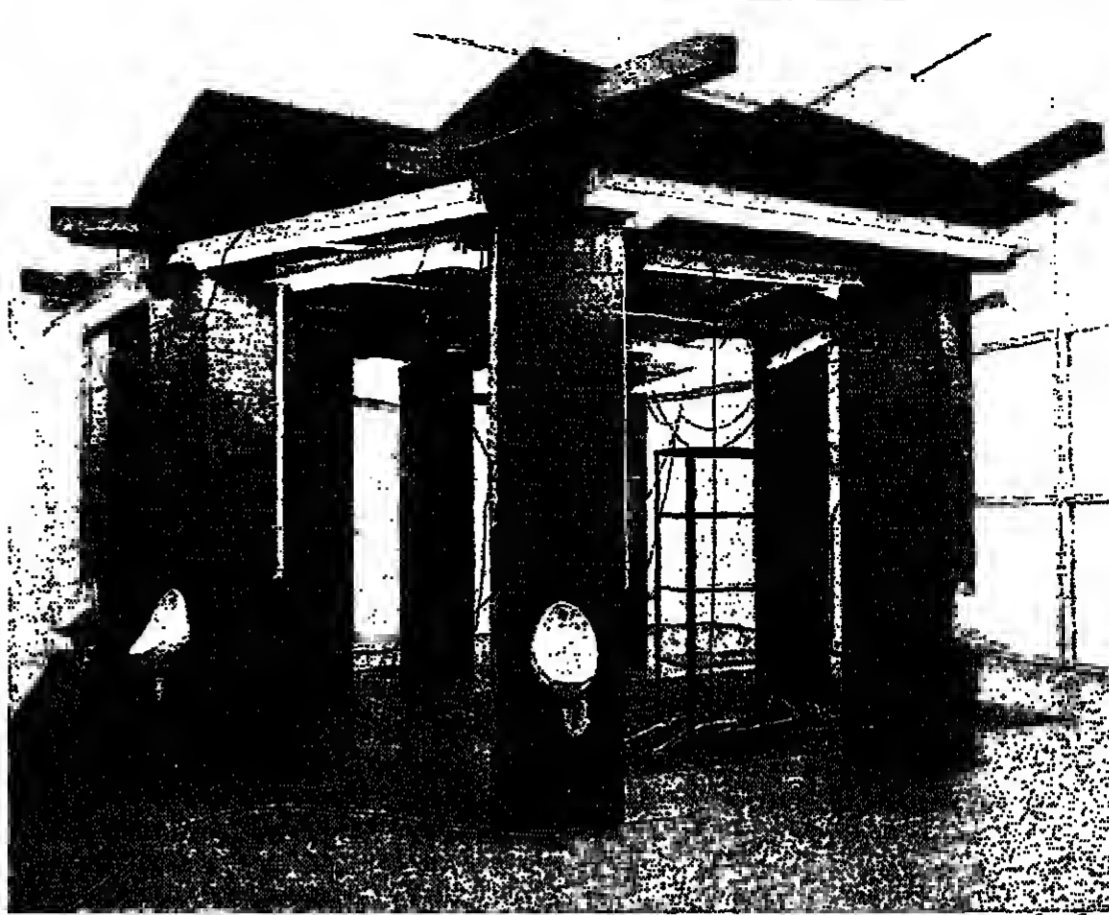
Fallen Cornice, 1993, by Edward Allington, the present Gregory Fellow in creative art at the University of Leeds, also questions the classical past which still so informs our present attitude to art and architecture. Made for a room at the Institute which retains the proportions of the

original merchants' offices, the eponymous cornice, recreated larger than life in copper lies on the floor. In its descent from the ceiling, it has dragged with it some of the inner workings of the building, suggested by lengths of armoured cabling trailing from the roof. Allington's work explores the continuing role of classical convention in our mass produced present, economically conveyed by such ironic displacements.

Herbert Read, the centenary of whose birth is celebrated by a marvellous exhibition at the Institute's next door neighbour, the City Art Gallery, throughout the 1930s also questioned the dominance of the classical, Mediterranean tradition in our view of art, suggesting that it should be set against the romanticism of Northern Europe to be fully understood. This early position became typical of Read's dialectical approach in his writings about art, and allowed him to defend both abstraction and Surrealism during the 1930s, when their practitioners were at daggers drawn, and in the 1960s to accept the new precepts of abstract expressionism while still remaining loyal to the naturalistically based work of Henry Moore and Barbara Hepworth.

Only in his later years did his ability to accept and understand the new begin to fade. His famous dislike of Pop Art may perhaps be traced to the socialist and anarchist views of his youth, formed during his years at Leeds University from 1912 to 1914 when he was also a member of the radical Leeds Arts Club. The Pop artists' blithe acceptance of the crude mechanics of capitalist advertising he found hard to take. "For him," his son Ben, one of the curators of the exhibition, told me, "art was always very serious."

Read's move to London in 1933 thrust him into middle of the progressive artistic community then beginning to gather in Hampstead



Vittorio Messina's 'Confini d'Occidente', 1993, using only ready made industrial materials

which formed the bedrock of his aesthetic development. The exhibition's greatest success is to celebrate Read's individual vision, so much the product of the circumstances of his life. It is moving to see works by Hepworth or Nicholson or Moore presented to Read in the context of their long friendship, and touching to see his huge desk, made to his own design when he was championing modernism to an unresponsive audience when briefly professor of fine art at the University of Edinburgh (1931-33). This quiet Yorkshireman could not only be a radical but a true internationalist, helping to bring a sceptical England its first

sightings of surrealism and abstract expressionism and, eventually, worldwide recognition. His final lecture, given in Cuba 1968, was on "The Problems of Internationalism in Art."

Not just a writer, lecturer and thinker, he also got things done; he was one of the founders of the Institute of Contemporary Art in London, for example, becoming its first chairman in 1947. He never shrank from the difficult questions and spent his life discussing the role of art in what he believed to be its proper place, the very heart of a society's political and social development. That he could do so with such confidence,

that he was also not afraid to allow his views to develop, was perhaps because as a lifelong writer of poetry the creative process was an intimate part of his own experience, giving him the strength to remain true to his aesthetic instincts.

Gas Works, James Turrell, The Henry Moore Studio, Halifax, tel 0423 320250. Cell: *Celda*: Celda: the Henry Moore Institute, Leeds, November 11 1993 - February 5 1994, Leeds; tel 0532 467467. Herbert Read: *A British Vision of World Art*, Leeds City Art Galleries, November 2 1993 - February 5 1994.

Pantomime Little Red Riding Hood

The pantomime season at The Theatre Royal, Stratford East kicks off with *Little Red Riding Hood* which has picked up *The Three Little Pigs* somewhere on the way to granny's house in the forest. This is a traditional, enjoyable and, at two hours flat, a child-friendly pantomime: no lewdness and only a bit of cartoon violence. But it is still short of the laugh riot it could be.

The amalgam of characters includes a Wolf in the Noel Coward lupine mould, all furry fury plus smoking jacket, lisp ("Wof! Wof! Wof!"), an occasional song and an overall excuse "Ah, it was a lovely help." Then there is Nigel the Woodcutter, a woodsman bewing down the forest in his furs and wielding the axe like a sand iron; he is the love interest for Red, and sings a parody of Luther Vandross so good that the object of his desires notices. "You've been eating those mushrooms again... Maybe we could be pen friends." Red herself is formidable in a gingham tullecloth of a dress alongside her father who seems to have clothed himself in chessboards.

Of course there is an apple-cheeked granny, some crackling good porky giggles who manage a fine trotter five, a couple of wandering Cockney "barrah persons" and a Liverpudlian dog which needs bolstering with a special "Bravery song" from the audience. The opposition are the Wicked Witch (who turns out to be Red's long lost abducted mother) and her sidekick Earwax who are, luckily, powerless beyond the storybook forest set.

The pantomime comes alive when the characters turn to the audience. They ask what is going on, or taunt them, or in the Wolf's case, are blown off stage by them. The music (Anthony Ingle) keeps the atmosphere going, especially with a louché Wolf theme in the tracks of Henry Mancini's "Panthor" and a good James Brown number for the Witches. The script is peppered with goblets of Shakespeare, Hollywood ("The company of wolves") and pop references ("I'm too



'I'm too sexy for my fur'; the Wolf at Stratford East

sexy for my fur" says the Wolf). The actors seem to enjoy the evening, especially when they have something to work with and react to. The first casualty on the audience side was an infant escorted away mewling and puking for an early half after five minutes of the first half; but happily she was the only dissenter in an evening of genial warmth and good spirits. Jeff Teare Directs.

Andrew St George

Theatre Royal, Stratford East (081 534 0310) until January 22

Opera in New York/Paul Griffiths 'I lombardi' with Pavarotti

This is an odd Met season: the three new home-grown productions are all of Verdi operas, two of which are early pieces the company has never staged before. Six weeks ago there was *Stiffelio*; now comes a work to make that opera seem a triumph of sober maturity and deep interest: the ramshackle story of fraternal rivalry, changed allegiances, betrayal and baptism, hermit and heroine, battles and hissing set among the Lombards at the First Crusade.

Time and the critics have not been kind to *I lombardi*. It was the first Verdi opera to be performed in America - in 1847, four years after its introduction at La Scala - but then inevitably was rapidly overtaken by later works, and Verdi himself seems to have hoped to hasten its burial by recasting it, also in 1847, as *Jerusalem*. Julian Budden calls it "an agglomeration of heterogeneous ideas, some remarkable, some unbelievably banal" - a judgment which the Met production cannot but sustain.

Beautifully modulated responses to Bellini cantabile flow up against the blocky contours of trivial choruses; fine orchestral moments - some of them very fine indeed, and exquisitely played under James Levine - exist alongside raucous march tunes. There is the feeling of a sensibility at war with itself, which may be the composer's response to the hellish subject matter, but which may also be the flailing of a young artist beginning to gain possession of his talents but not yet certain how to use them.

The result is conspicuous wastefulness. *I lombardi* is almost baroque in its scenic demands, requiring at least ten different sets and several costume changes for the chorus. Happily these are areas in which the Met excels. John Conklin, the set designer, provides a useful unity and

grandness of image by keeping a row of great gold-panelled doors along each side of the stage, and his conjurings of the different locales are quick, emblematic and strong: a Romanesque arcade and rose window for the basilica of the first scene, Moorish arches for the tyrant of Antioch's palace, a painted landscape for the River Jordan, a cyclorama of mustard light for the desert. Dunya Ramkova's costumes are also simple and colourful - especially the patterned robes of the Antiochians and the copper armour of the crusaders. Nowhere, rightly, is there much effort at historical accuracy: these are broad, modern reactions to the 19th century reacting to the 11th.

I lombardi is also wasteful in its treatment of minor characters. Vicinda, cause of the dispute between the brothers, sings briefly in the first scene; by the next act her daughter is praying to her spirit, without anyone having bothered to tell us she had died. The tyrant of Antioch has his hot moment at the start of the first act, and returns as a corpse. Sofia, his wife, appears in just one scene, where her sole function is to serve as an admiring audience for her son, Oronzo.

Since this is Luciano Pavarotti's role, she acts as the embodiment of the entire house - or certainly did so on the opening night, when Pavarotti was at his most mellifluous and persuasive in this mama's boy aria. His tone was unfailingly sweet, his comportment of the voice between registers assured, and his decoration nimbly executed without disturbance to the line. This was artistry. Sadly, he slackened his care and attention in his later scenes, though there were excuses for that. In his love duet with the Christian Giselda he had to hold to

his line - and he did - against Aprile Millo's disturbing mistunings (and she was as zealous in holding to her quarter-tones). In his reappearance from the dead, the absurdity, together with his backward placement on the stage, may have been responsible for encouraging a more uniform, and uniformly loud, treatment.

Samuel Ramey, as Pagano, was more consistent in his singing, and in his vivid presence: he alone on stage conveyed the impression he thought he was in something that mattered. And he did so despite the fact that the piece required him to present not one character but two, with no opportunity for developing one out of the other.

In the first act Pagano is naked villain: Ramey aptly and ably used that stark, particularly on long "a" sounds, that he can produce without damage to his melody. In the following three acts, where the move to the Holy Land finds the wicked brother become a somber crusader, he softened in tone, but not in power. Even when prayerful and subdued, he was in command. The honours belonged to him, to Pavarotti in his first aria, and to Levine and the orchestra, whose leader, Raymond Gnielak, played decorously in the violin concerto which underlies the whole last scene of the third act.

Bruno Beccaria was stark as the good brother Arrino. Anthony Laciura made startling use of his high tenor as the Milanese grandee who comes rushing into the opening scene with news of the coming crusade. Mark Lamos's production otherwise neutral, except in some regrettable choreographing of the chorused maid him look like a Russian holy fool, which was effective. The production remains in repertory until January 20, though Ramey leaves it after Christmas.

INTERNATIONAL ARTS GUIDE

AMSTERDAM

Concertgebouw Tonight's Netherlands Philharmonic concert is conducted by Vassili Sinaïski, with cello soloist Julian Lloyd Webber. Martha Argerich plays Beethoven's Second Piano Concerto tomorrow and Thurs with the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra conducted by Claus Peter Flor, who also directs a second programme on Fri evening and Sun afternoon, featuring Jaap van Zweden in Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto. Wolfgang Holzmair gives a song recital next Mon (ticket reservations 020-671 8345). Muziektheater Dutch National Ballet's Christmas production is the Ashton staging of Prokofiev's *Cinderella*, opening tonight for a run of 13 performances till Dec 29. Netherlands Opera has Alfred Kirchner's new production of *La traviata* on Dec 18, 19, 22, 25, 27 and 30 (020-625 5455).

ANTWERP
de Vlaamse Opera Robert Carlsen's

new production of *La bohème*, conducted by Silvio Varviso, opens tonight with a cast led by Mary Mills, Fabio Armiliato and Jean Glennon. Repeated Dec 17, 19, 21, 23 and 28 in Antwerp, and Jan 6, 8, 11, 14 and 18 in Ghent (03-233 6885). deSingel Philippe Herreweghe conducts Collegium Vocale tonight in works by Gesualdo, Webern, Messiaen and Stravinsky. Roses, the Brussels-based dance troupe directed by Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker, gives performances next Tues and Wed (03-248 3800).

BRUSSELS

Artis Quartet plays string quartets by Mendelssohn, Webern and Zemlinsky tonight at the Conservatoire. The programme at Palais des Beaux Arts includes a piano recital by Radu Lupu on Thurs and a Belgian Radio Orchestra concert on Sun afternoon featuring Rodrigo's *Concierto d'Aranjuez* (Alfonso Moreno), conducted by Alexander Rahbari. Ricerar Consort presents a programme of music by Schütz, Marco-Antonia Charpentier and other 17th century composers at Eglise des Minimes on Thurs (02-507 8200).

DANCE/OPERA

Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker's dance troupe Roses presents her latest choreography, entitled *Mikrokosmos*, at Lunatheater tonight, tomorrow and Thurs. Stravinsky's *The Soldier's Tale* runs daily till Sat at Théâtre Varia, in a production conducted by Dirk Boly and staged by Philippe Saevel. The Monnaie has final performances

tonight and tomorrow of Schumann's *Manfred*, and revives Guy Joosten's staging of *Carmen* next Wed for four performances, with Kathryn Harries in the title role (02-218 1211).

CHICAGO

CHICAGO SYMPHONY
Pierre Boulez conducts tonight's programme of Bartok and Ravel, with piano soloist Krystian Zimmern. Thurs, Fri, Sun afternoon: Zubin Mehta conducts Webern and Schubert. The orchestra then takes a Christmas break till Jan 6, when Daniel Barenboim returns for two weeks of concerts (312-435 6666).

CHICAGO LYRIC OPERA

Zubin Mehta conducts *Die Walküre* tonight, Sat and next Wed, with a cast including Eva Marton, James Morris, Siegfried Jerusalem and Tina Kiberg. *Il trovatore*, conducted by Antonio Pappano, can be seen tomorrow, Sun and next Tues, with Chris Merritt, Lyuba Kazarnovskaya, Dolora Zajack and Paolo Gavanelli (312-332 2244).

GENEVA

Beno Besson's production of *Die Zauberflöte* is revived tonight at Grand Théâtre, and runs daily except Dec 19, 24 and 25 till Dec 28. Armin Jordan conducts alternating casts including René Pape, Kurt Streit, Amanda Hallgrímsson, Simon Keenleyside and Donna Brown (022-311 2311). Golden's play *The Titled* *Lovers*, directed by Patrick Lapp and designed by Ezio Frigerio, can be seen at Théâtre de Carouge on

Dec 18, 19, 28, 29, 30, 31 and Jan 11-31 (022-343 4343).

THE HAGUE

Dr Anton Philippsaal Tomorrow: *Concierto* plays works by Stravinsky, Carter, Henza and Schoenberg. Sat evening, Sun afternoon: Günther Herbig conducts Hague Philharmonic Orchestra Prokofiev, Elgar and Tchaikovsky (070-306 9810).

UTRECHT

Vredenburg Tomorrow: Hartmut Haenchen conducts Netherlands Chamber Orchestra in works by Wagner, Reinecke and Strauss. Thurs: Alexander Dimitriev conducts St Petersburg Symphony Orchestra, with piano soloist Hélène Grimaud. Fri, Sat, Sun: festival of music by Dutch composers (030-314544).

VIENNA

MUSIC
Staatsoper Tonight: *Capriccio* with Felicity Lott. Thurs, Sun: *La traviata* with Nancy Gustafson. Fri: *Tosca* with Gwyneth Jones. Sat: Nutcracker. Next Mon: first night of new production of *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* with Domingo, repeated Dec 23, 27, Jan 2, 7, 10 (51444 2955). Musikverein Tonight: Ferruccio Furlanetto, accompanied by Alexis Weissenberg, in songs by Mussorgsky and Rakhmaninov. Tomorrow, Thurs, Fri: Vladimir Fedosyayev conducts Vienna Symphony Orchestra in Beethoven, Berg and Bruckner, with soprano Patricia Wise, Sun and Mon:

Alexander Jenner conducts Tonkünstler Orchestra in Gershwin, MacDowell and Dvorak (505 8190). Konzerthaus Fri: Malcolm Bilson piano recital. Sun: Roger Norrington conducts Austrian Radio Symphony Orchestra and Chorus in Berlioz's *L'Enfance du Christ*, with Robert Tear, Sarah Walker and Thomas Allen. Next Mon, Tues, Wed: Rudolf Buchbinder gives a Beethoven Piano Concerto cycle with Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Rafael Frühbeck de Burgos (712 1211).

THEATRE

Ruth Berghaus's new production of Brecht's *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* opens at Burgtheater on Sat (51444 2218). Repertory at Akademietheater includes David Mamet's *Oleanna* and Chekhov's *Uncle Vanya* (51444 2959). Raimund Theater has the German-language premiere of *Kiss of the Spider Woman* (Wien-Ticket 58885).

WASHINGTON

DANCE/MUSIC
● The Nutcracker: Washington Ballet's production, staged by Mary Day, runs till Dec 26 at Warner Theater (202-432-SEAT). Jeffrey Ballet's production, staged by Robert Jeffrey and Gerald Arpino, runs till Dec 19 at Kennedy Center Opera House (202-467 4800). ● Handel's *Messiah*: Baltimore Symphony Chorus at Joseph Meyerhoff Symphony Hall tomorrow and Sat (410-783 8000). Washington Oratorio Society at Kennedy Center Concert Hall on Fri, Sat, Sun morning and next Mon (202-467 4800). Folger Consort and Choir

of Magdalen College Oxford on Dec 20, 21 and 22 at National Building Museum (202-544 7077).

THEATRE

● A Community Carol: a retelling of Dickens's Christmas classic, transposed to today's Washington DC. The production by Arena Stage and Cornerstone Theater Company mixes professional actors and community members. Till Jan 2 at Arena Fichandler Stage (202-488 4377). ● Holiday Memories: Truman Capote's tales of his childhood, adapted for the stage by Russell Vandenbroucke. Till Dec 28 at Olney Theater (301-924 3400). ● Cats: Trevor Nunn's production of the Lloyd Webber musical. Till Jan 8 at National Theater (202-628 5161). ● The Will Rogers Follies: the Tony Award-winning musical opens next Tues at Kennedy Center Opera House for a six-week run (202-467 4800).

ZURICH

Tonhalle Tonight, tomorrow, Thurs, Fri: Marek Janowski conducts Tonhalle Orchestra in works by Haydn and Richard Strauss, with soprano Pamela Coburn. Sat: Eduard Muri conducts South-West German Philharmonic in Liszt, Tchaikovsky and Dvorak, with piano soloist Bruno Leonardo Gelber (01-261 1800). Opernhaus Tomorrow, Sun: Der Rosenkavalier. Thurs: Bernd Blenert's production of Glazunov's ballet *Raymonda*. Fri: *Così fan tutte*. Sat: Salome (01-262 0909).

ARTS GUIDE

Monday: Berlin, New York and Paris.
Tuesday: Austria, Belgium, Netherlands, Switzerland, Chicago, Washington.
Wednesday: France, Germany, Scandinavia.
Thursday: Italy, Spain, Athens, London, Prague.
Friday: Exhibitions Guide.

European Cable and Satellite Business TV

(Central European Time)
MONDAY TO FRIDAY
Super Channel: European Business Today 2230; repeated 0630, 0715
MONDAY
Super Channel: FT Reports 1230
TUESDAY
Super Channel: West of Moscow 1230
EuroNews: FT Reports 0745, 1315, 1545, 1845, 2345
WEDNESDAY
Super Channel: FT Reports 1230
THURSDAY
Super Channel: West of Moscow 1230; FT Reports 2130
EuroNews: 0745, 1315, 1545, 1845
FRIDAY
Super Channel: FT Reports 1230
Sat News: FT Reports 2030
SATURDAY
Sky News: 0330, 1330
SUNDAY
Super Channel: FT Reports 2230
Sky News: FT Reports 1730; 0430

The international community is starting to look beyond the conflict in the former Yugoslavia, and is becoming increasingly aware of the true magnitude and seriousness of ethnic and political conflicts in the former Soviet Union. The problem is indeed a pressing one.

The disputes in the Transcaucasus, central Asia, and elsewhere in the former Soviet Union are causing great suffering for those involved. They are a source of legitimate concern to the Russians, who are worried by clashes close to their borders. They are concerned too about the safety of ethnic Russians living in those countries where there are conflicts, and about the economic and social consequences of refugees fleeing to Russia (whose potential number is estimated at more than 2m).

They believe that the problems in some of the former Soviet republics are either ignored or misunderstood. The Russians fear that if they do nothing, the conflicts will worsen and probably spread. They argue that they have a legitimate concern in trying to resolve conflicts that threaten their security. They ask why, when the international community is engaged in peace-making and peacekeeping in many of the world's trouble spots, similar efforts should not be undertaken in the hot spots near them.

Equally, these disputes are of legitimate concern to Britain, its western partners and the whole international community, both for humanitarian reasons and because such flashpoints risk provoking regional instability. If uncontrolled, they pose a variety of threats to European security, including increased traffic in drugs and arms as well as international terrorism. Crises in Russia's newly independent neighbours may also complicate Russia's relations with the west: unless they are carefully handled, they risk prejudicing the emerging relationship between us.

The west is sometimes suspicious of Moscow's attitude. There are no differences about the need to resolve these conflicts; but there are differences over how to go about it. The British government will not underwrite Russian involvement unless it is sure that peacekeeping troops will not turn into occupying forces. Nor are countries that secured their independence when the Soviet Union was dissolved keen that the west should con-

Challenge of peacekeeping

Douglas Hurd and Andrei Kozyrev on a possible framework for co-operation



Douglas Hurd (right) and Andrei Kozyrev: problem of conflicts within the former Soviet Union is a pressing one

cede to Moscow the same role it played in the Soviet empire. They fear that this would compromise their sovereignty. When they are willing for Russian troops to play a peacekeeping role, they want there to be some form of international monitoring. This has meant that, even though the west lacks the resources to engage directly in those trouble spots, it has been wary of appearing to endorse Russian involvement. Instead, in case it had imperial tendencies.

If we are to fashion a joint approach by Russia and its western partners to the problem of peacekeeping in the former Soviet Union, we must address all these concerns. Clearly Russia has an important role to play in this area. If the Russians want interna-

tional recognition and more active support from the international community, the west in turn needs guarantees that Russia will not regard recognition of its involvement as giving it carte blanche in the former Soviet Union. Peacekeeping in the former Soviet Union, as indeed peacekeeping elsewhere, must comply with internationally recognised principles. It needs to be looked at on a case by case basis. Respect for the sovereignty of the newly independent countries must remain paramount.

We agreed that the principles underlying Russian, CIS or international peacekeeping operations would need to include: strict respect for the sovereignty of the countries involved; an invitation from the government concerned and

the consent of the parties to the conflict; commitment to a parallel political peace process; a clear mandate setting out the role of the peacekeeping forces (which should whenever possible be multinational in character); and an exit strategy for the peacekeeping forces deployed.

These principles should help stimulate a dialogue and political settlement between the parties to the conflict, focus attention and, where possible, resources on the settlement of conflicts in the former Soviet Union.

All this will help enhance Russian peacekeeping practices. Although the Conference for Security and Co-operation in Europe and the UN lack the resources to put large numbers of peacekeepers on the ground themselves, they may be able to suggest measures to enhance transparency and to monitor the peace process. Extending co-operation within the North Atlantic Co-operation Council, and also co-operation between Russia and Nato, might help improve training for Russian peacekeepers. This is an area we shall need to explore further.

We also need to put much more emphasis on preventive diplomacy. One of the ways in which we can help prevent conflicts is to strengthen the democratic institutions in the newly independent countries of the former Soviet Union. The CSCE and other international institutions can play an important role here, drawing the newly independent countries into a more active dialogue on ways of promoting democratic values and principles. We discussed ways of strengthening the CSCE's role, including the role of the High Commissioner for National Minorities, at the recent Rome ministerial meeting.

We must try to find ways of managing and resolving tensions before they erupt into conflict. It will not be easy, but we must try. Potentially explosive cocktails of ethnic and political animosities could spread the fire of intolerance all too easily to other countries and regions.

We need to deal with it together in the spirit of partnership. And we need to deal with it urgently. Our security is indivisible and we must ensure it by vigorous and imaginative efforts aimed at promoting peace for all as well as rights for all.

The authors are UK foreign secretary and Russian foreign minister

We must try to find ways of managing and resolving tensions before they erupt into conflict

Wheel of fortune wobbles



Opinion polls showing the government at a nadir of popularity and the official opposition at a peak tell us nothing. If the published numbers have any meaning, it is surely that the Labour party has only one way to go: down. That being the case, the Conservatives can expect to recover some of the support they have lost since April 1992. This supposition works if you believe in the Great Wheel of Fate theory of alternating poll leads for the two tired old parties.

I suspect that Mr John Smith puts his faith in another Big Wheel, the one that determines which party shall govern. The Labour leader acts as if every Buggins his turn, if only he waits. Watch him. You would think that all he has to do is sit tight with his deputy, Mrs Margaret Beckett, in their little swing chair. When the time comes, they have merely to close their eyes, lean back and enjoy the inevitable whoosh to the heights of power. From the top of the Wheel they may peer down on Mr John Major, by then an ex-prime minister, walking disconsolately into retirement.

Mr Smith would do well to note the wealth warning imposed on the financial services industry. Past performance is no guide to future outcomes. Labour has come back from nowhere before, but cannot be sure that it will do so again. Much depends upon what Mr Smith himself does. Merely positioning his party against the day when the Tories fall may not be sufficient.

You could forgive the Labour leader for taking a more sanguine view. Since the collapse of communism, electorates in

many countries have turned against sitting governments. In the past few months voters have badly frightened the prime minister of New Zealand and nearly exterminated Canada's Progressive Conservatives. Italians have rejected their traditional political parties. Russian voters showed at the weekend that they can be as fickle as the rest of us. It is also true that if ever a government deserved to be thrown out, it is the one we have. Britain's Conservative administration looks less like a discredited rabble today than it did before the Budget, but not much less.

No party leader, least of all Mr Smith, would be foolish enough to assume that the Tories will remain in so sorry a state right through until a general election in, say, 1996. The correct supposition for any grown-up strategist must be that economic recovery plus a closing of the Conservative ranks will win back much of the support lost by the government since April 1992. Labour cannot afford to bank in its present deceptive popularity. It has to address itself to what will doubtless be a far less propitious political marketplace of the future. So far, Mr Smith has done little to instill confidence that he knows how to do this.

Yet the contrary argument - that the party must simply keep itself united, stay out of trouble, and pace itself properly - has some merit. Reasonably, the Labour leader has devoted much of his first 16 months in his new job to internal housekeeping. So far, the net result has been a disappointingly small reduc-

tion in the influence of trade unions, bought at a high price in political pledges. At the same time, Mr Smith has embraced wholesale constitutional reform, while kicking the electoral system into touch by offering a referendum. He has at least managed to prevent a party split over proportional representation. As to Europe, Labour played with parliamentary fire during the Maastricht ratification debates, and might have scuppered the bill. Yet today the opposition looks nearer to the heart of continental affairs than do the Tories. When he approaches the European Union, Mr Major walks on this glass.

At the same time, Mr Smith has paid due attention to day-to-day tactics. Labour is properly devoting much energy to reminding us that the Tories' low-tax election campaign of last year was a swindle. This week Mr Smith has withdrawn co-operation over the conduct of parliamentary business. This is a justifiable response to the government's rash attempt to rush the privatisation of sick pay and the increase in national insurance through the Commons. Perhaps Mr Major thinks everyone is too busy Christmas shopping to notice. Stories of Mr Smith's late on these matters might help spread the message that paying more national insurance is the same as paying more income tax, only less fair.

The test for the Labour leader comes next year, the 50th anniversary of the 1944 white paper on full employment. Mr Smith has already committed his party to that half-century-old aspiration; possibly even with an election.

The Labour leader should remember that a row is probably the best way of attracting public attention to changed thinking

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Number One Southwark Bridge, London SE1 9HL

Fax 071 873 5938. Letters transmitted should be clearly typed and not hand written. Please set fax for finest resolution

A comic insight on bio-piracy

From Dr P A Leonard

Sir, I would like to share an anecdote on the issues around the protection of pharmaceutical inventions through the Gatt ("Bio-piracy" under new fire, November 30). When a child, my two brothers and I were given one penny for each year of our ages to spend on sweets each week. My elder brother also bought a comic with this money, which cost him three of his 10 pence. My younger brother and I were happy with this arrangement, since we spent all our money on sweets and read his comic once he had. This did not seem fair, and my elder brother soon stopped buying a comic - much to our disappointment. Finally, we agreed we would each donate a penny for the shared comic and the problem was solved.

The pharmaceutical industries of Canada, Egypt, India and 13 Latin American countries you identified as opposing the obligatory protection of pharmaceutical patents in the Gatt, want us to buy the comic for them to read. The "comic" is, of course, the investment in research and development which innovative pharmaceutical companies must make to improve health care. If these companies stop buying the comic, they go out of business. The patent system will not stop anybody reading the comic, it will merely make them wait a while, until the innovative pharmaceutical industry has prepared the next issue.

P A Leonard, executive, science and technology, Chemical Industries Association, Kings Buildings, Smith Square, London SW1P

British manufacturing far short of world class

From Dr Michael Cross

Sir, Over the past two to three years, I and a number of colleagues in the US and Japan have compiled an analysis of "world-class" manufacturing operations. We used the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award criteria as a means of defining world class, and any operations scoring more than 900 we called world class. In all, we considered just over 12,000 operations and managed to identify 1,039 operations scoring more than 900 on the Baldrige Scale. The results show that Japan has 675 world-class manufacturing operations, North America has 221, west Germany 71, Britain

40 and France 32.

When the number of operations are split by location, the result is revealing about local circumstances. Of the Japanese-owned operations, 510 are in Japan; for North American-owned operations, 113 are in North America. For both the German and French operations the bulk are in their home countries, with 67 and 29 respectively. Yet for the British operations, 34 are located outside the UK.

I think we have a long way to go if the UK manufacturing base is to become world class. Michael Cross, 20 Amherst Road, Ealing, London W13 2ND

A tribune of the people in HM Treasury for a day

From Mr Andrew Currie

Sir, It is a little depressing, even if inevitable, that all those whom you have appointed Minister for a Day have sought to increase the budget and the power of their ministries.

Perhaps you should balance each future appointment by offering a column to the day's

chief secretary to the treasury.

He could set out the case that people should be free to lead their own lives without the interference and tax demands of the ministry. Andrew Currie, 3 Beardsley Way, London W8 7TQ

Merger to raise Kent's industrial development

From Mr Paul Sablin

Sir, I noted with interest the article entitled "Tees set for bigger industrial policy role" (December 6) by David Goodhart. He is right to observe that the greater role in deciding regional industrial policy given Tees is a significant move. In Kent we believe that this is an exciting opportunity to enhance and improve training and economic development services in a county undergo-

ing considerable change.

But I am concerned by your statement that in Kent the Tees will "take over the economic development activities of the Kent County Council". This is not the case. This is a merger between two organisations concerned with economic development. As a result a new organisation will be created, building on the strengths of the existing bodies. It is important that the business community perceives

Mediocre results of analysis

From Mr Martin Roberts

Sir, "Why the FT knows its school tables" read the headline of John Authers' article on school examination league tables on November 20. This being the FT, the headline suggests one should expect a sophisticated analysis.

As far as this school was concerned, the article was ignorant about our catchment area and assumed, amazingly, that the cohort from which our A-level candidates was drawn was the same as for GCSE. A telephone call to the LEA or to me would have indicated that this school serves a far wider catchment than "the plum academic area in North Oxford" and that its 1993 A-level candidates included 25 per cent who joined us at 16+ from other schools. To compare our A-level results favourably with our GCSE ones and conclude that our GCSE results are "distinctly mediocre" displays distinctly mediocre powers of analysis. Martin Roberts, headteacher, The Chiswell School, Marston Ferry Road, Oxford OX2 7EE

Right diagnosis, wrong remedy for Maastricht fatigue

From Mr Gary Miller

Sir, Edward Mortimer is right in his diagnosis of post-Maastricht fatigue in Europe but wrong to look to the European Constitutional Group's "constitution" for a cure (December 6), particularly in advance of the next enlargement of the Union planned for 1995.

Behind this initiative is nothing less than a mischievous attempt to unravel decades of slow and painful constitutional development that has successfully provided for peace and an expansion of trade in the relations between an ever-increasing number of member countries.

This achievement has been based on the very principles that the ECG seek to undermine: the supremacy of Community (now Union) law referred by an independent court; the ability of the Commission to make legislative proposals independently of particular national interests; the possibility of majority votes in the council of ministers, so that one recalcitrant country cannot veto the progress of others; and the ability of a directly-elected European parliament to offer the democratic scrutiny of what goes on in Brussels that one national parliament cannot hope to provide alone.

There can be no doubt that, without these principles, however imperfectly they have been applied, we would not have had the single market or the prospect of monetary union.

A constitution could bring the present Union closer to its citizens and make its institutional machinery more open and comprehensible. But it will not do so by ignoring these tried and tested principles.

For example, the ECG's proposal to add another parliamentary chamber composed of national representatives to the Brussels ensemble will just confuse the public even further

and render an already cumbersome decision-making process unworkable.

For a remedy to the malady he identifies, Mr Mortimer would do better to look to the draft constitution for the Union which has been drawn up in the past few weeks by the European parliament.

This will probably be presented to national parliaments in current and potential member countries for consideration before the 1996 review of the Maastricht Treaty. Gary Miller, Watersbach 121, B-3050 Oud-Heverlee



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FINANCIAL TIMES

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Tuesday December 14 1993

No turning back in Russia

Russia's election result has been greeted with dismay, even before it is fully known, by Russian would-be reformers and their friends in the west. This is because of the strong showing by Mr Vladimir Zhirinovskiy's ludicrously misnamed Liberal Democratic party, and by the disappointing performance of the pro-reform parties associated with President Boris Yeltsin.

Yet there may be greater cause for concern about the way Mr Yeltsin and his allies will react to the result than about the result itself. Mr Yeltsin has achieved his stated objective of winning popular approval for a new constitution which gives him extensive powers and severely restricts the power of parliament to prevent him using them. He now has the constitutional strength, and his incumbent prime minister, Mr Viktor Chernomyrdin, has already shown some of the political skills required to manage a weak and fractious parliament. Their western friends must encourage them to persevere with reform, because only accelerated reform offers any hope of delivering the economic benefits which may persuade Russians to resist the siren songs of communist nostalgia and nationalist escapism.

Russia's most crying needs now are for legislation which will allow it to attract foreign capital, for an effective privatisation of land enabling it to return to self-sufficiency in grain, and for basic institutional reforms allowing the government to control the money supply and ensure that real interest rates are positive. Mr Yeltsin now has the chance - almost certainly his last - to fulfil those needs. If he again hesitates in the face of opposition, as he has too often in the past, he will be lost.

He would be especially unwise to seek to co-opt Mr Zhirinovskiy, or to woo away his supporters, by embracing some of their truculent chauvinism towards the west and towards Russia's neighbours. To a limited extent he already tried

that during the election campaign - but fascism thrives on appeasement, as history all too abundantly shows.

By the same token, the west must be prepared to resist any argument that Russian appetites for resources should be indulged for fear of strengthening Mr Zhirinovskiy's support. It should continue to support Russia's political and economic transformation - indeed should do so more effectively than hitherto, notably by opening its markets more readily to Russian products. But this can only be translated into support for Mr Yeltsin personally to the extent that he continues to act as the agent of that transformation, and if in foreign policy he shows full respect for international law and the integrity of Russia's neighbours.

It should be made clear, in particular, that Russia has no veto over other countries' membership of western organisations. Nato membership cannot be extended lightly, and would in any case not solve the most immediate security problems of central and east European countries. But it is those problems - rather than the sensitivities of Russia's domestic politics, which remain hard for outsiders to predict let alone influence - that should be the determining consideration. The west can not afford to neglect the vital task of filling the security vacuum in central and eastern Europe by integrating it into the west European economy, and preparing the countries concerned for EU membership at the earliest possible date.

It would be wrong to despair of a successful outcome to Russia's transition. The election result merely underlines dangers and difficulties of which serious observers were well aware. In response, the west must continue to strike a delicate balance between strengthening Russia's understandably nervous neighbours and working for the greater prize: a stable and prosperous Russia anchored by ties of permanent friendship to the west.

The scale of the defeat for reform in Russia is potentially massive - but only potentially. Enough political scope remains for reform to continue, or at least for the achievements of the past two years to be preserved. It depends on the main actors: most of all, on the lead player, President Boris Yeltsin.

The incomplete results of Russia's first democratic elections on Sunday show the Liberal Democratic party of Mr Vladimir Zhirinovskiy in either first or close second place in the half of the State Duma, or lower house, chosen by party lists. The Communists are either second or third. A senior aide to Mr Yeltsin forecast early yesterday that the anti-reformers would command double the vote of the reformers, and while the percentages might change, the basic fact would not.

Mr Yegor Gaidar, leader of Russia's Choice and first deputy prime minister, has already conceded defeat of a kind - chiding himself and the other reformist parties for disunity, and commenting that: "Frankly, there was something so comic about this figure of Zhirinovskiy, leader of the Yabloko group, which is likely to be the fourth-largest party in the parliament, and who thus can claim to be the second reformist party, said that 'their programmes are neither for the market nor against the market. They are the most dangerous kind of demagogues'."

Mr Zhirinovskiy, displaying once more the demonic energy which appears to power him beyond the laws of thermodynamics, peppered the media yesterday with interviews demanding for his party the chairmanship of the lower house, declaring his party's readiness to enter government, and forecasting Russian expansion as far as the Indian Ocean.

He must be very pleased. For the past two years he has run an organisation whose only well-known member is himself, and which has never entered into coalitions with other nationalists. His steady belief in his own talents, energy and mission to gain political power, coupled with a machine-gun wit and breathtaking territorial claims, does indeed call up a vision of Adolf Hitler returning for the second time as farce - but a farce which still has the capacity to transform itself back into tragedy.

Mr Yeltsin. It would seem, has two alternatives in face of this

Bitter harvest of disunity

Divided reformers in Russia have failed to stem the rise of extreme right and left parties, says John Lloyd

surge from the extreme right and left. First, he can broadly continue his programme - as Mr Boris Fyodorov, the finance minister, yesterday urged him to do by showing "political will" in face of the nationalist surge. This would mean retaining reformers like Mr Fyodorov, Mr Gaidar and Mr Anatoly Chubais, the deputy prime minister, for privatisation; continuing to support their economic plans; and attempting to steer legislation through parliament by putting together coalitions issue by issue.

This is possible, in theory. The passing of the draft constitution has made Mr Yeltsin one of the most powerful elective presidents in the world, with the ability to issue decrees without any let or hindrance by parliament. Apart from his powers, he has shown in the past two years no inhibition about using patronage to hush over those whom he cannot persuade. Further, the composition of the parliament is largely non-party: members of the 178-strong Federation Council, or upper house, are elected from the regions and republics on the basis of their local status rather than their ideology. The same, to a slightly lesser extent, applies to the half of the lower house elected on a first-past-the-post system. The impression gained by many foreign observers was, first, that most people were confused by the complex voting papers and, second, they voted on name recognition, not party affiliation.

The result is likely to reproduce what was evident in the previous Supreme Soviet - a *bolshak*, or marsh, in which the deputies roll this way and that. The threat is that the marsh hardens in opposition to a president and a government which ignore their wishes.

However, Mr Yeltsin's instincts and history may lead him in a second direction, that of the presidential figure who wishes to remain above the conflict by constructing a government which draws its membership from a wider constituency of views than the present one - with ministers either coming directly from the neo-fascist and Communist parties, or reflecting their position.

The first signs are that he will go



Election blow: Russian officials shred unused ballot papers with an axe

this way. Mr Vyacheslav Kostikov, the Mephistophelean figure who is his press secretary, wasted little time in telling the Interfax news agency that there was much in the fascists' and communists' electoral programmes which "quite corresponds to the social aspect of the president's policies - that is, the social policy of the state, patriotism, making Russia great".

The latter two appeal to Mr Zhirinovskiy, and to Mr Gennadiy Zyuganov, the Communist leader who has repeatedly said he is a Russian nationalist before he is a com-

munist internationalist. However, Mr Kostikov's bland statement masks the obvious question - how far does Mr Yeltsin's embrace of patriotism have to go before it finds common ground with a neo-fascist party whose leader has claimed Poland and Finland for a renewed Russian empire? Even Mr Zyuganov was quoted yesterday as saying that he did not go down the same road as Mr Zhirinovskiy. "We are realists,"

However, a lurch towards a hard-edged nationalism seems inevitable, resulting in harsher treatment

of the former Soviet republics to bring them into line. This would confront impoverished Ukraine, in deep debt to Russia and possessing missiles, a naval fleet and a territory (Crimea) which Russia wants, with the terrible dilemma of knuckling under or attempting to withstand a colder blast from the east than it has been used to since Mikhail Gorbachev came to power eight years ago. It would also threaten the fragile relations with Latvia and Estonia, where Russian troops remain, and make clear to the Central Asian and Caucasian states that their leash is still held by Moscow, and that it is shortening.

Where Mr Yeltsin to sway in this direction, it is all but certain that the reformers would feel constrained to leave the cabinet, or would be asked to do so. They have had only mixed success this past year; and though Mr Fyodorov has made much of keeping the last quarter's budget within tight limits, he appears to have done so only by cutting or deferring expenditure which will have to be put through in this coming year. Only if they have an even more solid base for support than they have enjoyed so far could they hope to deepen reforms; and they evidently do not have that. Their tone yesterday was mournful. Mr Chubais has been especially emphatic that "I will not shake fascists by the hand."

The next stage of economic reform was always going to be the hardest. Whether it was to be driven by Mr Gaidar's insistence on tight money, or Mr Yavlinsky's preference for demonopolisation and faster privatisation, vast unemployment is likely to burst into the open as practically bankrupt enterprises go belly-up and cast their workers out to fend for themselves. Giant plants - like Uralmash engineering in Ekaterinburg, the Vaz car plant in Nizhny Novgorod and the ZIL truck and car plant in Moscow - are now working short time and juggling with huge debts.

The International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, poised to support and to lend to a reformist government, are now high and dry. A planned timetable of meetings designed to drum up a new surge of patriotism have to be postponed. A summit between Presidents Yeltsin and Clinton in Moscow next month, is now in doubt.

There has been a real advance in these elections: Russia has succeeded in adopting a constitution which proclaims it an advanced democratic state committed to private property and the rule of law. But the reality of these grand phrases is still in suspension.

Private post

It is easy to sympathise with Mr Mike Heron, chairman of the UK's Post Office. His comments yesterday about a growing sense of crisis in the organisation and the need to avoid a spiral of decline may be exaggerated. But the frustration caused by the government's inability to make up its mind about the Post Office's future and by continual raiding of its coffers is real enough.

Ideally, the Post Office would be privatised. This would free the group to act in a commercial manner. Gone would be the days when investment plans were curbed as a result of being included within the public sector borrowing requirement. The Post Office would also, no doubt, find scope for efficiency among its 180,000 staff.

Unfortunately, privatisation does not seem to be on the agenda. Although ministers have been reviewing the options for 18 months, few believe they will back a sell-off. This is largely for political reasons. The government, mindful of its slim parliamentary majority, is anxious to avoid the sort of controversy that surrounded rail privatisation.

But ministers should not settle for inaction. Instead, they should embrace a twin-track approach: granting the Post Office greater commercial freedom, while setting

up a transparent regulatory structure.

First, the Post Office should be free to exploit its existing assets more intensively. It should, for example, be able to use its post offices to distribute a wider range of services. The more the network is used, the less the danger of politically damaging closures. Moreover, though it is unlikely the Post Office can be free of PSBR constraints until it is privatised, there is no reason why it should not come up with imaginative proposals for attracting private finance for new investment. Such a market test for risky new ventures like electronic mail, where the Post Office's capacity to compete has yet to be proved, would in any case be better than splashing out taxpayers' cash.

Second, setting up a regulator now should help calm some of the anxieties backbenchers have over privatisation. It would, for example, be possible to work out how to maintain a nationwide delivery service while opening the postal business to greater competition.

Such a twin-track approach would not only be desirable in itself. It would also prepare the Post Office for the time when privatisation becomes politically feasible. Ministers cannot afford to go on dithering.

People's law

European leaders have been emphasising the principle of subsidiarity to counter post-Maastricht complaints that Brussels' decision-makers had lost contact with the people. Decentralising, where possible, the exercise of power throughout the European Union represents a plausible way of quelling voters' suspicions about the influence of unaccountable bureaucracies. However, to adapt a phrase from its deliberations on unemployment, the EU must recognise that there are no miracle cures to the problem of putting subsidiarity into practice.

The weekend announcement that the European Commission will repeal 16 pieces of legislation deemed to contradict subsidiarity is an encouraging step. Much more needs to be done, however, both to define the areas where the doctrine can sensibly be applied, and to make more transparent the way it is implemented.

The Euro-laws to be recast into more manageable "framework" directives include 1980 legislation on drinking and bathing water quality. Britain and France argued that these gave national authorities insufficient leeway to set their own methods of achieving overriding quality and health standards. It is ironic that two countries with highly centralised governments

should have successfully defended a principle normally seen as promoting revolution. However, detailed regulations on water quality - an area which does not materially affect cross-border competition, and where centralised rules offer no economies of scale - can be left to democratic forces in member countries.

Rather as anti-clogging lumber must regularly be discarded, continuous checks are needed to ascertain whether Brussels' existing stocks of legislation are in line with subsidiarity. Equally important, new laws must conform to the principle. The Commission needs to exercise a benign centralising influence in verifying that member states enforce directives on the single market. As the Union matures, the Commission's role will move away towards executing and monitoring measures, rather than initiating them.

One problem is the opacity of the system under which governments ask the Commission to check whether legislation passes the subsidiarity test. If the EU set up a consultative body of independent experts to produce annual reports on how subsidiarity is being applied, that would be a valuable way to show voters that the principle adds up to more than just one inelegant word.

How to contain ITV's menacing octopus



PERSONAL VIEW

encouraging more domestic competition. It is hastily enacting legislation that may result in new competitors and small existing regional ITV companies going out of business altogether. The government seems prepared to leave the regulators - the Independent Television Commission and the Office of Fair Trading - to sort out the mess.

It is not yet 12 months since the 40-year ITV airtime sales monopoly ended, when Channel 4 started selling its own airtime, and the first glimmer of competition was introduced. Yet before that market has even had a chance to develop, we have legislation going through Parliament this week which will allow Carlton to take over Central, and Granada to take over LWT - moves

that have the potential to restrict, not encourage, competition.

Concentration of ownership in principle is probably a good thing. A rationalisation of the antiquated and cumbersome ITV federal system is long overdue. But what the government has failed to recognise in this hasty revision of its new (and very recent) ownership rules is its devastating effect on the fragile and newly developing competition for domestic ITV advertising.

Ownership is one thing - selling airtime another. If Carlton is allowed to sell airtime for (as well as own) Central, and keep its resultants in ITV, and Meridian, we may well have a potential world player, but the government will also have created a menacing octopus whose tentacles will strangle home competition.

Similarly, Granada's hostile bid for LWT would put it in an equally dominant position, with minority stakes in GMTV plus Yorkshire and Tyne Tees, and a sales arrangement with Scottish Television.

There you have it - a recipe for two huge potential players to dominate the scene, with the capacity to

carve up the ITV production network between them, and the airtime sales market as well. Two players would have control and/or influence over a combined total of 70 per cent of Channel 3's revenue. Certainly Channel 4 will feel the pressure, but not as much as those Cinderella companies which have not been invited to the takeover ball, regional licensees such as Border, West Country, Anglia and new satellite and cable ventures.

There is a simple solution to this cartel scenario which would in no way interfere with the government's global strategy for ITV. It lies in preserving the ITC's so-called 25 per cent rule. This regulation limits the size of ITV joint sales operations to 25 per cent of each of ITV's total revenue. The ITC laid

down this rule as recently as 1991 because it was concerned that a new competitor, such as Channel 4, had not become established.

The major advertisers I have spoken to see only one consequence of relaxing the 25 per cent rule - arbitrary price rises by the big two ITV operators, Carlton/Central and Granada/LWT. As evidence I offer this response last week from one large advertising agency: "We support the 25 per cent rule as it is, but we don't say so publicly. We can't afford to risk the biggest ITV players taking it out on us."

The 25 per cent rule is up for review early next year. The ITC must not relax it. Competition has not developed as fast as it might have. Yes, Channel 4 is a great competitive success, but it holds less than 20 per cent of the television advertising market. There is no sign yet of a fifth national channel which would offer more competition. Growth of satellite advertising revenue has not taken off yet. ITV remains the biggest game in town with 75 per cent of revenue.

Incidentally, the government might have avoided lumbering the

ITC and the OFT with this problem if it had provided Carlton and Granada with the obvious bidding competitors - other UK media players. What stopped it from relaxing cross-media ownership rules at the same time? This would have allowed other global British media players such as Pearson, the Daily Telegraph group and Associated Newspapers to join the TV ownership club. Could it just be that the government was afraid that, if it relaxed these rules, its favoured player, Rupert Murdoch's News International, would have been first into the new members' book?

Ah well, just another missed opportunity for the government to get its broadcasting policy on to its own, much-wanted level playing field. Thank goodness for the ITC's 25 per cent rule - it is the last bastion of fair play. Now is the time for all good regulators to come to the aid of the market.

There is a simple solution to this cartel scenario which would in no way interfere with the government's global strategy for ITV. It lies in preserving the ITC's so-called 25 per cent rule. This regulation limits the size of ITV joint sales operations to 25 per cent of each of ITV's total revenue. The ITC laid down this rule as recently as 1991 because it was concerned that a new competitor, such as Channel 4, had not become established.

Incidentally, the government might have avoided lumbering the

Michael Grade

The author is chief executive of Channel 4

WHAT more can we say?

■ WTA might make it. GAT is in with a chance, as is MTA. But GAT and WHAT are probably all dead ducks.

There's nothing like skirmishing over acronyms to get a serious politico hot and bothered. The selection above are all candidates to replace the scarcely understood GAT, or General Agreement on Trade and Trade, due to expire any minute.

US negotiators fret that WTO, or Multilateral Trade Organisation, will displace the US Congress. It sounds too much like ITO, or International Trade Organisation, which Congress vetoed in the late 1940s on the grounds that trade sovereignty was threatened.

In 1990 Congress raised the same objection against WTO, World Trade Organisation. So maybe General Agreement on Trade, GAT? The General Agreement on Trade Organisation - GATTO - fails because it's Spanish for cat. But the biggest no-hoper so far proffered must be the World High Authority on Trade, or WHAT.

Old boys

■ Kroll Associates, the international corporate sleuths, is known to be a company that likes to get its name in the story, if not

in the headlines. But on the subject of Michael Oatley, its UK director of operations and the man reported to have acted as intermediary between the British government and the IRA in 1990, it is unusually reticent.

Oatley joined Kroll in February 1991 after "retiring" from the British intelligence agency MI6. At one time he was seconded to the Northern Ireland Office and did work in the Foreign Office's Middle East department. Beyond that, Kroll won't be drawn, pleading the Official Secrets Act. Yesterday 58-year-old Oatley was away on Kroll business at an "undisclosed foreign destination".

Hot stuff

■ At least one new award-winner of the much-touted BS 5750 quality standard should be guaranteed a steady stream of business as a result of the accolade. But there again, South Shields Crematorium can't have suffered from a declining market. And few of its customers are in a position to complain.

Washington's Seitz

■ US secretary of state Warren Christopher has a pressing task to end a deputy to succeed Clifford Wharton, summarily disposed of last month.

He has a few names in the hat but it's reasonable to think

OBSERVER



'I plumped for the ultra-fascist candidate at the last moment'

Raymond Seitz, currently ambassador in London, is in with a fair chance. Christopher is said to be looking for an experienced career diplomat.

Seitz is certainly that. He also has the advantage of early availability: next year retired Admiral William Crowe takes over in London.

Two other contenders - Tom Pickering and Stapleton Roy occupy the hot spots of Moscow and Beijing respectively and may be difficult to move. Another veteran diplomat, Morton Abramowitz, now running the Carnegie Endowment in Washington, has ruled himself out

because of sharp disagreement with US policies in Bosnia. But Michael Armacost, former US Ambassador in Japan, is free.

Whoever gets the nod still faces confirmation by the Senate, which has been sticky with nominations this year. President Clinton has ineffectually complained about the Senate's sluggish ways. So far this year he has sent 618 candidates for the top 957 jobs, but only 455 are in place.

Auld lang syne

■ How the mighty crumpled when they fall. Once France's arts minister, Jack Lang now needs a job; he has been stripped of his parliamentary seat for having spent too much on his campaign in the spring elections.

Lang, 54, bluntly denounced the loss of his seat as an "attack from the right". True, the conservatives never concealed their hatred of him, one of the most popular and powerful members of the socialist cabinet and a close confidant of President François Mitterrand. "They also loathed his policies as arts minister, not least his elaborate grands projets, like the Louvre renovation scheme."

But Lang undeniably went over the FF500,000 limit that French politicians are allowed to spend on their electoral campaigns - FF90,000 over the limit to be precise. He is also banned from standing

from the French parliament for at least a year. That may not trouble him too much; he is eyeing next year's European parliament elections.

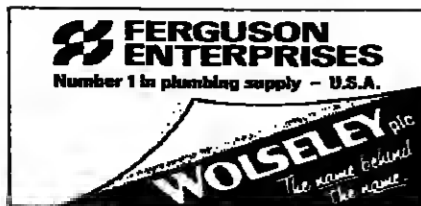
Headline news

■ From where did Yasser Arafat, chairman of the Palestinian Liberation Organisation, derive his distinctive headwear? It was Suha - who arrives in London with husband Arafat today - an interview which revealed the truth in an interview with a US television network.

Look carefully and you will see the headgear is folded over Arafat's right shoulder in the shape of Palestine as seen on a map. Look again at the top of his head; the fabric is intended to be arranged in such a way as to represent the cupola of the Dome of the Rock mosque in Jerusalem. Power dressing indeed...

Seasonal hangover

■ And now some good news for Berliners. The city's tax collectors have decided only to send out letters containing "positive news" during the Christmas holiday season. Notices of overdue taxes, fines and court subpoenas will only be posted in January. Wolfgang Grassnick, spokesman for Berlin's finance authorities, says: "We don't want to spoil anyone's holidays with negative news."



FINANCIAL TIMES

Tuesday December 14 1993



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Ministers agree to make EIB first choice for loans

By Andrew Hill in Brussels

The European Union should turn first to the European Investment Bank for loans to fund heavy investment planned for transport, energy and telecommunications networks, finance ministers agreed yesterday.

Mr Philippe Maystadt, the Belgian finance minister, who chaired yesterday's meeting of EU finance ministers, said the EU would have to consider other means of funding trans-European networks only if the EIB had reached its borrowing limits.

On Saturday, EU leaders confirmed that EIB's (€5.7bn) of annual spending on networks would come from the existing EU budget, and EIB's of loans and guarantees from the EIB and the new European Investment Fund. But during the summit, some leaders and finance ministers, notably from Britain and Germany, criticised European Com-

mission proposals to raise an extra ECUbn a year through the issue of "Union bonds".

If the EIB could provide the extra funds, it would provide a simple way out of the potentially divisive debate about extra financing. Mr Maystadt said yesterday that the issue would be examined by the council of ministers, the Commission and the EIB in an attempt "to deepen the analysis of the limits of EIB involvement".

He said Mr Jacques Delors, Commission president, had designated Mr Henning Christophersen, economics commissioner, to coordinate the policy on trans-European networks.

Separately, ministers formally agreed the legally binding macro-economic guidelines which will be the basis of economic convergence during the next phase of European economic and monetary union, beginning on January 1. The original draft guidelines were modified to take into

account the summit's conclusions. In particular, the agreed text suggests using new fiscal measures - for example, environmental taxes - to fund a decline in social security revenue.

The guidelines include a general call for lower interest rates, wage restraint, lower budget deficits and lower government debt. The final text also suggests that real wages could drop in certain sectors of the economy, a clause which the Greek finance minister said his country could not accept. The text was not altered and the Greek government will have to observe the guidelines, but it was able to attach a declaration to the final text saying an improvement in the European economy had to be accompanied by real wage increases.

EU acts to ease multiple share
Commission takes fresh look at tobacco ban. Page 5

Air France outlines its new plan to stem losses

By John Riddling in Paris

Mr Christian Blanc, chairman of Air France, yesterday revealed proposals to stem losses at the state-owned airline and set a target of matching the performance of Lufthansa, its German rival, by 1997.

The proposals, which come two months after a previous recovery programme was abandoned in the face of a bitter strike by Air France employees, have been presented to the airline's 14 union groups. A final document, incorporating the views of the unions, will be discussed with company employees in January and February.

Mr Blanc, who took over as chairman following the resignation of Mr Bernard Attali, the architect of the previous recovery plan, painted a grim picture of the group's financial and operating performance. His response involves a series of cost-cutting measures, plans to increase productivity and the prospect of the allocation of shares to employees in return for pay cuts.

In a statement to employees, Mr Blanc said that Air France would report losses of about FF7.5bn (\$1.27bn) this year and would have debts of about FF7.6bn at the end of December, compared with about FF2.6bn at the end of last year.

"Air France does not earn enough, spends too much and its productivity is inferior to its competitors," the statement said. "The situation requires a rapid change in methods and morale, a superhuman acceleration."

Air France, on the list of 21 companies due to be privatised, said it would set a target of a 10 per cent increase in productivity for each of the next three years. Operating costs, ranging from fuel to office equipment, would be cut by 7 per cent a year and staff costs by 10 per cent each year for the next three years.

Elf golden shares. Page 18

Italy's Northern League to seek alliance with Berlusconi

By Robert Graham in Rome

Italy's populist Northern League led by Mr Umberto Bossi has decided to break out of its political isolation and work for a "liberal-democrat" alliance that includes Mr Silvio Berlusconi, the media magnate.

This is the main upshot of a League congress at the weekend during which Mr Bossi imposed his full authority.

Mr Bossi had been criticised both for his autocratic leadership style and for failing to see the need for alliances in the recent local elections. The League, the party which won most votes in the north, campaigned alone and lacked support to win vital mayoral seats in the biggest cities.

The Italian media have been

speculating on a link-up between the League and Mr Berlusconi's nascent political ambitions for several months, but the matter has now been taken one stage further. Over the weekend Mr Berlusconi was perfectly happy to let his name be linked openly to the League in what appeared a well-orchestrated initiative.

Mr Bossi admitted the League had to change tactics to ensure it maintained a voice in Italy's fast changing political scene. He proposed the League as the hard core of an electoral alliance to fight the progressive one formed to good effect at local level by the former communist Party of the Democratic Left (PDS) to contest the municipal elections of November 31 and December 6.

"In Mr Bossi's speech [to the

congress], I found significant overtures towards the idea of a broad liberal-democrat alliance," Mr Berlusconi was quoted as saying. "I hope we can come close enough to form a coalition capable of representing a majority in the country and blocking the PDS's conquest of power."

Mr Berlusconi's supporters indicated the League's federalist ideas were a potential source of friction. The League congress called for reform of Italy's constitution to introduce a federal structure dividing Italy into three - Padania (north of the river Po), Etruria (the centre) and the south.

More importantly Mr Berlusconi could put his TV network licence agreements at risk by active involvement in politics.

Israel and PLO admit accord crisis

Continued from Page 1

serious problems after Mr Yitzhak Rabin, Israel's prime minister, and Mr Yasser Arafat, chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organisation, failed to reach agreement in Cairo on Sunday. The two men have agreed to meet again in 10 days.

Mr Shimon Peres, Israel's foreign minister, told Reuters: "It is a serious crisis... It is not the first, it is not the last. Negotiation is, in a way, a chain of crises you have overcome."

Mr Arafat said in the Hague: "Definitely there are serious problems, otherwise why the delay for 10 days?" The PLO leader warned further delay would seriously damage the credibility of the peace process.

Mr Rabin said it would be difficult to iron out outstanding differences within 10 days although

"matters of principle" could be resolved in that period.

An Egyptian official closely involved in the talks said the delay placed considerable pressure on the two leaders to find enough common ground to make a second summit meeting succeed. "That meeting would really be the last bell. If we can't reach that, we're really in trouble," he said.

Three key issues have yet to be agreed on the protocol which will lay the framework for an Israeli military withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and West Bank town of Jericho. These are the size of the Jericho area, control over the Gaza-Egypt and Jericho-Jordan border crossings, and the size and role of an Israeli military presence around Jewish settlements in Gaza. Mr Rabin told the cabinet yesterday that the main obstacle was the PLO demand to

control the border crossings.

Mr Rabin said he would allow a Palestinian presence at the crossings, but would not concede control because that would involve fundamental issues of security and sovereignty.

Some political analysts in Israel believe Mr Rabin is playing a dangerous game of brinkmanship by increasing the pressure on the PLO at a time of spiralling violence by extremists opposed to the peace process on both sides of the Arab-Jewish divide.

They also believe Mr Rabin is deliberately playing the security card to win back waning public support for the government's peace drive in the wake of increasing attacks on Israelis.

An opinion poll published yesterday showed support among Jews for the peace plan had fallen from 57 per cent in September to 48 per cent.

Gatt trade negotiations

Continued from Page 1

that only the last of these proposals be accepted. He told ministers that the EU should reserve the right to keep the audio-visual sector out of the Gatt deal altogether, as France has demanded.

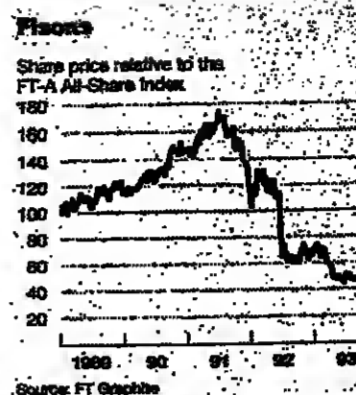
Disagreement persisted over US treatment of financial services. The telecommunications sector has been put on one side for further debate. A stand-still is expected in the shipping sector.

Fears receded that political crisis in Japan might scupper the round. The Social Democratic Party, part of the ruling coalition, was refusing to support liberalisation of the rice market as part of the Gatt deal. However this morning the Socialists opted to compromise and support the market-opening move.

THE LEX COLUMN

Fisons' bitter pill

FT-SE Index: 3254.6 (-6.7)



Source: FT Graphs

Fisons' ability to shock knows no bounds. Poor relationships with regulators and inadequate manufacturing standards in pharmaceuticals were the cause of its pre-Christmas profits warning two years ago. Now it transpires that profits have been massaged by selling cut-priced drugs to wholesalers shortly before the year end. Setting the accounts straight will cost £22m this year. The swing into loss in scientific instruments is more worrying. Even if management grip can be restored, the business looks poorly positioned in weak markets.

The broader lesson is that Fisons' top management has not undergone the necessary transformation since Mr John Kerridge resigned as chairman and chief executive in 1991. Instead of introducing a tough outsider at that stage, Mr Cedric Scroggs was elevated from within. His departure doubtless owes much to his role as architect of the apparently unsound instruments division. But other directors must bear their share of responsibility for not tackling the problems sooner. It must now be doubtful whether Fisons can attract a figure of sufficient stature to restore investors' confidence.

While cutting the dividend will help conserve cash at a time of rising capital expenditure, it is by no means clear that the company has the resources to flourish as an independent force in pharmaceuticals. There is always the hope that a drug industry giant will step in to provide both cash and management muscle. A market valuation of around £750m at yesterday's closing share price might start to arouse interest. While the price is falling and the surprise keeps coming, though, potential bidders have every incentive to wait.

UK economy

With wholesale price inflation apparently so muted and manufacturing output flat, it is not immediately obvious why the Bank of England should still be banging on about corporate margins. Where domestic margins have increased, it is more a case of costs being cut than prices put up. The manufacturing output figures may understate the true level of demand - surely the spurt in electricity production cannot all be due to cold weather. But the anecdotal evidence suggests consumers remain extraordinarily price conscious.

The export trade presents a different picture. If they believe figures which have become highly suspect, the

authorities have some reason for disappointment that export prices have increased about as fast as import prices since the UK left the ERM. Business is apparently taking advantage of the devaluation to widen margins rather than increase volume. The trend is worrying because it suggests failure to adapt to a low inflation environment. Presumably companies would be jacking up domestic prices if only the market would permit. The Bank will have to labour the point to drive home what is a long term message. If the fight against inflation is not to be too painful, companies must believe that the authorities will not accommodate excessive margin increases. That does not exclude the possibility of lower base rates in the short term. Tomorrow's retail price index could be a better guide to the immediate chances than yesterday's speech by the deputy governor.

UK television

Granada's barb that an independent LWT risked being marginalised in the brave new world of television has clearly struck a funny bone. LWT has since been constructing inventive theories for how a "quartet" of television stations could now merge. LWT is quite right to explore every avenue to maximise shareholder value. But from the outside, it is hard to see how it can devise a satisfactory scenario.

LWT might have hoped its 14 per cent shareholding in Yorkshire-Tyne-Tees would have provided a sound starting point. But this liaison has turned into a nightmarish blind date. The confirmation of further bad news and a passed dividend from Yorkshire

yesterday has only complicated the game. A straight deal with Anglia might have represented a simpler and more attractive defence.

Granada will be itching to conclude its bid quickly to frustrate any alternative plans and may be prepared to sweeten its terms to do so. LWT's institutional investors, who bought shares in anticipation of industry consolidation, are likely to prove fickle friends, especially when prices of 80 times historic earnings are being thrown around for starters. They may also dwell on the longer term trends in television. After reaping the benefits of the cyclical rebound in advertising revenue, ITV franchises will face a tough challenge growing earnings thereafter. Commercial television is a relatively mature industry. Future advertising growth will be at least partially undermined by emerging satellite and cable rivals.

UK equities

The new rules allowing a five-day delay in publishing large UK equity trades, introduced yesterday, are the stock exchange's latest effort to balance the interests of market makers with the overriding need for transparency. Publication of all bargains within five minutes, introduced after Big Bang, was considered "too tight" and discouraged market makers from dealing in large blocks of shares. Yet the 24-hour delay in publication of large trades, allowed after 1989, fell foul of the Office of Fair Trading. The 90-minute delay allowed until yesterday satisfied the regulators, but still left the market makers unhappy.

It is a fair bet that the new rules will not last long. The maximum five-day delay is generous, but the stock exchange has defined a large trade more narrowly than before. On average, less than 100 bargains a day meet the new criteria, of which only a handful typically involve FT-SE 100 stocks. Even so, any erosion of transparency creates problems of its own. Equity options traders might feel themselves at a disadvantage to market makers in the cash stock. The proof of the pudding will be whether the rules increase the number of block trades and thus improve liquidity, especially in smaller company shares. Still, the criteria for judging success has been left woefully vague. The regulators would do well to make sure that marginal improvements in liquidity are not being bought with significant losses of transparency.

Europe today

Conditions remain unsettled over most of Poland. A large low pressure area over Poland will cause snow and sleet in the Baltic states, eastern Germany and parts of former Czechoslovakia. A frontal system will bring bands of rain across central Italy, Croatia, Slovenia and Hungary. The Italian Apennines may have downpours. In north-western Europe, another depression will approach Ireland and Scotland. Along the Atlantic coast, there will be a severe gale. Gales will progress into the Irish Sea. Sunny and mild conditions may be expected in southern Spain and along the far eastern Mediterranean coast.

Five-day forecast

During the next 3 to 5 days, the Atlantic low pressure area will move across the North Sea toward the north-east part of the continent. Conditions will stay unsettled from Scotland to southern France with gales along the Atlantic Coast of France and across the North Sea. In contrast, Spain and south-eastern Europe will be sunny with seasonable temperatures. Snowy conditions are likely in the Alps with only little improvement, and snow is also expected in eastern France and parts of Switzerland.

TODAY'S TEMPERATURES

Location	Temp	Location	Temp	Location	Temp	Location	Temp	Location	Temp
Madrid	10	Cardiff	10	Frankfurt	10	Malta	10	Rio	10
Calcutta	27	Chicago	10	Geneva	10	Manchester	10	Riyadh	20
Abu Dhabi	27	Cologne	10	Gibraltar	10	Madrid	10	Rome	16
Accra	27	Dakar	10	Glasgow	10	Metz	10	S. Francisco	12
Algiers	20	Dallas	10	Hamburg	10	Miami	10	Singapore <td>31</td>	31
Amsterdam	10	Deli	10	Helsinki	10	Minneapolis	10	Sydney	16
Athens	18	Dubai	10	Hong Kong	10	Moscow	10	Taipei	16
Bahia	26	Durham	10	Honolulu	10	Nairobi	10	Tokyo	10
Bangkok	26	Edinburgh	10	Island	10	Osaka	10	Yokohama	10
Bombay	26	Faro	10	Jersey	10	Paris	10		
Buenos Aires	12			Kuala Lumpur	10	Seoul	10		
Cairo	12			London	10	Taipei	10		
Cape Town	12			Luxembourg	10	Tokyo	10		
Caracas	26			Madrid	10	Washington	10		
				Manila	10	Wellington	10		
				Montevideo	10	Winnipeg	10		
				Port of Spain	10	Zurich	10		
				San Jose	10				
				Santiago	10				
				Sao Paulo	10				
				Shanghai	10				
				Singapore	10				
				Sydney	10				
				Taipei	10				
				Tokyo	10				
				Yokohama	10				

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IN BRIEF

Elf golden share allows state veto

The French government's golden share in Elf Aquitaine will allow the state to veto asset sales, the French economy minister revealed yesterday. The oil group is due to be privatised early next year. Page 18

US group heads for the highways
Some 28 US companies have formed the Cross Industry Working Team (CIWT) to develop and promote information super-highways - high-speed digital networks that will link businesses and homes. Page 20

Laidlaw opens way for disposing of ADT
Laidlaw, the Canadian waste disposal group, is issuing \$200m in debentures that will allow it to dispose of its 24 per cent stake in ADT, the Bermuda-based security and vehicle auction group. Page 20

Sweden claims success for merger
Sweden says the merger of Nordbanken and Gota Bank was a success, in spite of the fact that rescuing the two banks cost the government SEK1.6bn (\$8.8bn) plus SEK110bn to cover bad loans. Page 20

Yorkshire discussing takeover with LWT
Yorkshire-Tyne Tees has confirmed that it is talking to London Weekend Television about an agreed takeover. Shares in Yorkshire rose 2p to 163p yesterday. Page 24

Greene King held to 1% profit rise
Greene King's first-half pre-tax profits rose only 1 per cent to £9.6m (\$14.8m). The company blamed the beer market in East Anglia, which it said had shown little evidence of economic recovery. Page 24

Berkley builds earnings by 83%
UK housebuilding group Berkley announced an 83 per cent rise in pre-tax profits to £12.6m (\$18.8m) during the six months to October 31. Page 24

SmithKline drug approved in UK
SmithKline Beecham has been granted a licence from the Department of Health to market its new anti-viral drug, Famvir. The drug, which treats shingles, opens up a potentially lucrative market for the company. Page 25

It never rains but it pours



In the US, nature has been more fickle than usual, flooding grain crops in the Midwest and visiting drought on the south-east. Farmers on high ground can boast record maize crops while their lowland colleagues have been wiped out by swollen rivers. Page 28

Hong Kong's world-beating increase
The Hong Kong market remained firmly on the upward escalator last week, recording the sharpest five-day rise for any market this year. Back Page

Companies in this issue

ADT	20	Hamlet	27
Alcatel-Alsthom	16	Hardys & Harmons	26
Anglian Water	24	Haye	27
Berkley	24	IBM	17
Bombardier	18	Ipswich	16
Booth Inds	27	Johnson Matthey	24
Brassey	27	Laidlaw	20
Business Technology	27	London Electricity	27, 18
Calderbank	26	Loral	17
Century Inns	26	MAS	21
Chrysalis	26	Mining & Allied	26
Code	26	Modus	26
DBL	20	Northern	27
Dawson	21	Nordbanken	27
Druid Systems	21	Pfaff	18
Elf Aquitaine	16	Radio Clyde	21
European Leisure	18	Rowe	21
Ewart	17	Richards	26
Federal Systems Co	17	Samwang	27
Fila Indmar	26	SmithKline Beecham	25
Fisons	16, 17	Standard Life	27
Frogmore Estates	27	Tophook	27
Goldstar	21	Trafalgar House	25
Gota Bank	20	Unicredit	27
Greene King	24	Van Heyat	19
		Vardic Bank	27
		Yorkshire-Tyne Tees	24

Market Statistics

Base lending rates	40	London share service	23-25
Benchmark Govt bonds	22	Life equity options	44
FT-A indices	33	London trad. options	44
FT-A world indices	36-40	Managed fund service	36-40
FT fixed interest indices	22	Money markets	40
FT/AMA int. bond sec	22	New int. bond issues	28
Financial futures	40	World commodity prices	41
Foreign exchanges	33	World stock mkt indices	41
London recent issues	24	UK dividends announced	24

Chief price changes yesterday			
FRANKFURT (DM)		PARIS (FF)	
Deutsche	463 + 10	Edo	635 + 39
Industrie	1102 + 22	Edi Logistik	1965 + 48
Nordbank	516 + 5.5	Edi Print	665 + 34
Pfaff	126.1 - 5.4	Edi Spil	392 + 17
Düffler-Werke	292 + 30	Edi Spil	183 - 9
Merck	775 - 30	Edi Spil (new)	
NEW YORK (\$)		PARIS (FF)	
Deutsche	224 + 14	Edi Spil	370 + 25
Industrie	344 + 16	Edi Spil	370 + 30
Loral	174 + 27	Edi Spil	370 + 30
NYSE	224 + 27	Edi Spil	370 + 30
US Surgical	144 - 14	Edi Spil	370 + 30
Pfaff	11 - 1	Edi Spil	370 + 30
Alaska Air		Edi Spil	370 + 30
Polycy		Edi Spil	370 + 30

NEW YORK prices at 12.30

Alcatel	40 + 4	Wipac	216 + 21
Alcatel	40 + 4	Wipac	216 + 21
Alcatel	40 + 4	Wipac	216 + 21
Alcatel	40 + 4	Wipac	216 + 21
Alcatel	40 + 4	Wipac	216 + 21
Alcatel	40 + 4	Wipac	216 + 21
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Alcatel	40 + 4	Wipac	216 + 21
Alcatel	40 + 4	Wipac	216 + 21
Alcatel	40 + 4	Wipac	216 + 21

IBM sells defence unit to Loral

By Louise Kehoe in San Francisco

International Business Machines is to sell its Federal Systems Company division to Loral, the US defence contractor, for \$1.58bn cash.

Last month IBM said it had received several offers for FSC, believed to be from American Telephone & Telegraph, Martin Marietta and the Hughes Aircraft division of General Motors, as well as Loral.

FSC is a US-based division of

IBM that sells computer systems and services, mainly to US government agencies.

It employs 11,400, almost all in the US. The division posted 1992 revenues of \$2.2bn, up from \$1.9bn in the previous year, but its business has been relatively flat amid US defence spending cuts.

For 1992 FSC recorded a net profit of \$71m after being assessed for a portion of IBM's restructuring charges.

About 80 per cent of FSC's business is defence related and 40

per cent is complex systems integration projects for agencies such as the Federal Aviation Administration and the US Postal Service.

FSC expects 1993 operating income, before corporate and restructuring charges, of \$165m on revenues of around \$2.2bn. Loral is acquiring all of FSC's businesses, except Federal Systems Marketing, which sells standard IBM products and services to government agencies.

Loral said the acquisition would not be dilutive. It would be

financed through borrowings.

"The Federal Systems Company consistently has been a leader in the highly specialised governmental marketplace," said Mr Lou Gerstner, IBM chairman. "Nevertheless, this market is changing rapidly today and we have determined that this sale is in the best long-term interests of IBM and its shareholders. We're pleased that FSC employees will join a company that is committed to the defence marketplace over the long term."

Mr Gerstner, who joined IBM

earlier this year, has made clear he is not in favour of breaking up the company. The specialised nature of FSC and its heavy dependence upon defence contracts, in an era of defence cuts, made it a prime candidate for sale as IBM slims its operations.

Following the acquisition, Loral will have combined annual revenue of around \$6bn and more than 35,000 employees.

IBM's share price rose on news of the sale to \$56.4, up from Friday's close of \$55.4. Loral rose \$2.4 to \$34.4.

Fisons ousts Scroggs as its chief executive

By Paul Abrahams in London

The board of Fisons, the troubled UK pharmaceuticals and scientific equipment group, has ousted its chief executive Mr Cedric Scroggs.

The company is now looking for its third chief executive in as many years. The group also announced its third profits warning since 1991, the resignation of its finance director and a cut in its dividend.

Mr Patrick Egan, chairman, said he had expected the group to make a pre-tax profit of £100m (\$146m) this year. But because of restructuring provisions and a change in trading policy for the drugs division it expected only to break even. He promised results would improve from 1994.

German banks' success has brought criticism, writes David Waller
If you've got it, flaunt it



Dresdner's Sarrazin

'Are we not allowed to do well, just because other sectors of the economy are doing badly?'



Deutsche's Kopper

'I'm always expecting letters of congratulation, but they never seem to arrive'

The final dividend has been cut from 5.4p to 4.3p (7p). The group said this would save £37m in cash next year. Fisons' shares closed down 24p at 113p.

Mr Patrick Egan, chairman, said: "Cedric was offered the opportunity to resign, which he refused. He was, in effect, sacked." The primary cause of Mr Scroggs' unexpected departure was the collapse in operating profits of the scientific equipment business for which he held board responsibility. The operations will report a loss this year of £18m against a trading profit of £12m last year.

Mr Egan said the business had been hit by the recession, but a £25m turnover was unacceptable. "There have been clear managerial weaknesses," he said.

Just as many rich Germans lead a modest lifestyle, the country's banks do not like to flaunt their prosperity. But in the past few weeks, the big banks have put reticence aside and told the world how they are making more money this year than they have ever done, in spite of the deep recession afflicting their customers.

One big bank after another has reported a surge in profits for the 10 months to October, even after making provisions for mounting bad and doubtful debts.

The growth was most pronounced at Commerzbank, the third largest, where operating profits after provisions rose by 52 per cent. But it was still impressive at Deutsche Bank and Dresdner Bank, where profits rose by 11 per cent and 16 per cent respectively. At Bayerische Vereinsbank and the Hypo-Bank, the two big Bavarian banks, profits grew at a respective 28 per cent and 27 per cent.

reserves" to keep reported earnings at whatever level suits them - could not serve to hide the fact that German banks' profits were embarrassingly good.

Coming at the trough of the German recession and a time of misery for the growing ranks of Germany's unemployed, the figures put the banks' chief executives on the defensive at recent press conferences.

"Are we not allowed to do well, just because other sectors of the economy are doing badly?" Mr Jürgen Sarrazin, chief executive of the Dresdner Bank, asked in an exasperated tone. "On the contrary: now is the right time for banks to show their strength, as a frail financial sector would push the economy deeper into crisis."

Bankers brush off the criticism with more annoyance than usual - partly as they know from the experience of recent months that power does not come without responsibility. During good times it may be a fine thing to own big stakes in dozens of big industrial companies, but in recession the stakes become a headache.

For example, today's meeting of the Deutsche Bank board will doubtless focus on problems at Metallgesellschaft, the troubled metals-to-mining conglomerate in which Deutsche owns an 11 per cent stake. At other board meet-

ings the troubles of Daimler-Benz (28 per cent owned by the bank) or the ailing Maho machine tools company (18 per cent) will have dominated the agenda.

A second reason for annoyance is that bank profits cannot be sustained at current levels, as Mr Kopper at Deutsche Bank said last week. He explained that much of the bank's growth in profits in the first 10 months was due to buoyant foreign operations, where profits climbed 40 per cent. In Germany, there was no escaping the recession, and profits at the parent bank actually fell by 9 per cent.

The collapse in profits at the scientific instruments division exposed some accounting practices in the drugs operations which, according to Mr Mike Redmond, pharmaceuticals managing director, were unwise but not illegal. These included boosting sales and profits by offering discounts towards the year-end. In 1991, when the practice was at its peak, it generated nearly a fifth of the division's sales.

Mr Roy Thomas, finance director, has resigned. He was scheduled to leave shortly. Mr Redmond said his early resignation was not related to the discounting policy.

The discounts have been stopped. The drugs division's trading profits would be £28m less than they would have been, said Mr Redmond. Operating profits this year would also be hit by a charge of £3m for restructuring and one of £5m for stock write-offs. A further £15m would be charged over the next two years to cut annual costs by £25m.

Lex, Page 16; SmithKline approval, Page 25

The main impetus for growth came from buoyant conditions in world securities and currencies markets, which helped the banks make record trading profits on their own account and generate healthy commission income from dealing on their clients' behalf.

On top of this came an increase in profits from mainstream lending. In the six months to October, bank lending was still growing at an annualised rate of 9.2 per cent, despite the depth of the recession. Mortgage business is growing even more rapidly as demand for loans has been stimulated by extremely low long-term interest rates.

Offsetting the growth in profits was a sharp deterioration in domestic credit quality. All the big banks, with the exception of Commerzbank, reported substantial increases in provisions to cover questionable risks. At Deutsche Bank, provisions surged 54 per cent to DM2.5bn (\$1.47bn) in the first 10 months of the year and are likely to reach DM3bn for the year as a whole.

On balance, even the full flexibility of German accounting - which gives managers considerable scope to deploy "hidden

the power of the banks, the best known of whom is Mr Otto Lambsdorff, economics spokesman of the Free Democrats (FDP), believe the banks enjoy an overnight concentration of economic power that is detrimental to consumers and competition. That power, critics allege, stems from the banks' extensive holdings in German industry and their seats on the supervisory boards of big German companies.

Some analysts also believe that Trafalgar's board may have decided to repay part of its more costly debt such as the 10% per cent bonds due in 2014. This would absorb some of the proceeds of the planned £400m rights issue of convertible preference shares, details of which are also expected today.

The rights issue was announced in October when Trafalgar issued profits warnings and said the business review had concluded that the February issue would not provide sufficient resources to support the group's expanding engineering and construction businesses, the refurbishment of its fleet and plans to invest in infrastructure projects. Trafalgar's share price closed 2p higher at 87½p.

not to mention their ability to make vast profits amid recession. "The power of the banks must be broken apart," Mr Lambsdorff said last week ahead of a hearing in Bonn at which politicians met to consider whether banks should be subject to new legal constraints on their activities. "The power of the banks damages Germany's economy."

Many as a place to do business," said Mr Hans Martin Bury, an MP for the opposition Social Democrats.

In a year's time, Mr Sarrazin of the Dresdner Bank will look back with nostalgia on the days when he had to be defensive about making record profits.

The bail-out agreements impose strict conditions on participating banks to guard against a recurrence of the bad debt crisis.

Trafalgar House to announce large provisions and write-offs

By Paul Taylor in London

Trafalgar House, the troubled conglomerate, will today report substantially larger than expected year-end asset write-downs and provisions.

Full-year provisions are likely to total about £400m (\$597m), dwarfing even the most pessimistic estimates from analysts, who have been predicting provisions of up to £270m, including £120m of provisions to cover restructuring and property write-downs announced at the interim stage.

Provisions on this scale will swamp the expected small underlying annual profit and appear to confirm Trafalgar's reputation for coming up with unexpected bad news. Last year Trafalgar reported a £30.3m pre-tax loss.

The size of the year-end provisions reflects the determination of Trafalgar's new management

to get to grips with the group's problems and clean up its battered balance sheet.

Trafalgar is now firmly under the influence of Hong Kong Land, which has invested £200m, and built up a 26 per cent stake. Hong Kong Land has four board representatives including Mr Simon Keswick, chairman, and Mr David Gower, finance director.

Trafalgar's board instituted a business review with the group's new financial advisers, Robert Fleming and Schroder Wagg. Independent valuations were made of the group's properties, including group-occupied properties that have previously been held at cost or on the basis of earlier valuations; the commercial property portfolio; the group's hotels including the Ritz, which was last valued in 1988; and the Emerald oil rig in the North Sea. It is understood that

these new valuations have shown the need for substantial write-downs.

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This announcement appears as a matter of record only.

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INTERNATIONAL COMPANIES AND FINANCE

Golden share in Elf gives France veto on asset sales

By John Riddling in Paris

Mr Edmond Alphandery, the French economy minister, yesterday gave details of the golden share to be retained in Elf Aquitaine, the oil group which is due to be privatised early next year.

According to Mr Alphandery, the terms of the golden share will require government approval for other investors, either acting individually or in concert, to raise their shareholdings in Elf above the limits of 10 per cent, 20 per cent and 33.3 per cent.

The golden share, which will be of unlimited duration, will also give the French government a veto over asset sales if it feels they threaten the

national interest. This veto will apply to asset sales in Elf Aquitaine Production, Elf Antar France, Elf Congo and Elf Gabon, an official said.

In addition to the golden share, the French government will retain a holding of between 10 and 15 per cent in Elf through Erap, the state holding company, which currently controls 50.8 per cent of the oil group's shares. The precise level will be set at the time of privatisation, which Mr Alphandery said would take place in the first few months of next year.

Mr Alphandery said the measures would "ensure the protection of national interests" following Elf's privatisation. "With the golden share on the

one hand and the state's stake on the other, we have found the right balance," he said.

Oil industry analysts said yesterday's announcement reflected the sensitivity of the privatisation of Elf Aquitaine. France's largest industrial group, "The golden share is no surprise," said one analyst, "but the government is clearly retaining a maximum of control under the terms of the privatisation law."

The sale of the stake in Elf Aquitaine will be the first privatisation to take place next year. It will be the largest so far in the government's programme to sell 21 publicly-owned firms and is expected to raise between FF400bn and FF500bn (\$8.6bn).

Bombardier sees loss on Channel project

By David Buchan in Calais

Bombardier, the diversified Canadian transport group which is making the Channel tunnel shuttle, expects to make a loss on its contract to supply railcars, but hopes that the technical prestige of the contract will bring future compensation and orders.

Mr Michel Lord, a vice-president of Bombardier, said that his company would not have signed its C\$620m (US\$421.2m) contract in 1989 to supply 254 railcars if it had known there was going to be an eventual C\$450m cost overrun.

Bombardier said the overrun was almost entirely due to design changes imposed on contractors by French and British government safety inspectors, such as a 10cm widening of some doors, and demanded compensation.

In a deal reached earlier this month with Eurotunnel, the operator of the undersea rail link, Bombardier settled for C\$137m in cash and up to 25m shares in Eurotunnel, which at their current valuation would bring the compensation up to C\$375m.

"A speedy out-of-court settlement for less is far better than spending 10 years in court for more," Mr Lord said. Bombardier, which in accepting the shares has become Eurotunnel's largest single shareholder, hopes that in other contracts it would be able to recoup losses it had made on the Channel tunnel project and find a use for the technical lessons it had learnt.

"The Eurotunnel railcars are the most sophisticated product we have ever made in this line," said Mr Lord, because of their size - some are double-decked to take cars - and because of the security equipment required in the 50km tunnel.

Speaking at the French end of the tunnel which has now been handed over by Trans Manche Link, the construction consortium, to Eurotunnel, the latter's director-general, Mr André Bertrand, indicated yesterday it would still be some time before Eurotunnel presented its final bill.

High-flyer not yet out of a tailspin

Fisons is still facing an uncertain future, writes Paul Abrahams

For Fisons, the UK pharmaceutical and scientific equipment group, yesterday's bad news was only the latest in a succession of sackings, profit warnings and restructurings over the last three years.

This was once a high-flying company, transformed during the 1980s by the then chairman and chief executive Mr John Kerridge from a loss-making fertiliser manufacturer into a drugs and equipment group that was touted as the next Glaxo.

After Mr Kerridge took the helm in 1980, Fisons' share price rose from a low of 12.5p to a high of 512p in July 1991. Five months later Mr Kerridge resigned, officially for reasons of ill health.

Yesterday the stock closed down 24p at 113p, its lowest since 1984.

Fisons' difficulties first manifested themselves two years ago following regulatory problems with the US Food and Drug Administration.

The subsequent management reshuffle left Mr Patrick Egan, a non-executive and Unilever veteran, as chairman. After some delay, Mr Cedric Scroggs, the scientific equipment director, was promoted to chief executive.

The first managerial change was fairly orderly. The latest crisis, which came to a head on Monday night during a lengthy board meeting, has left the company in disarray without a chief executive, without a finance director and without an apparent strategy.

Mr Egan's first task is to find replacements for Mr Scroggs and Mr Roy Thomas, the

Lifeboat sent for bondholders

Fisons yesterday sent out a lifeboat to holders of its only public bond issue, a £100m offering of 10-year Eurobonds, by offering to buy back the bonds at Friday's closing level or to exchange them for a new issue of five-year bonds, writes Antonia Sharpe.

Investment bankers at JP Morgan, who had spent the weekend hammering out the strategy, said that Fisons had taken this action because it wanted to maintain a presence in the bond market without placing investors at a disadvantage.

News of Fisons' restructuring plans caused some embarrassment to JP Morgan as only two months ago it had arranged the company's first public bond offering since 1986. The deal had been seen as a feather in JP Morgan's cap in view of Fisons' lack of a credit rating and its poor performance in the stock market.

finance director who resigned on Friday.

That could prove difficult. In 1991, two headhunting firms failed to find a convincing outsider to replace Mr Kerridge as chief executive.

The chances of finding a credible executive from the drugs industry to replace Mr Scroggs are even more remote now that the company's plight is even worse.

The scientific instrument business, through which Mr Scroggs built his reputation, will suffer a collapse in operating profits this year, falling from £12m last year to a loss of about £16m during 1993.

Mr Egan admits the business is a curate's egg. The organic analysis equipment operations are very good, although they are not performing as well as they should, he says. Parts of the inorganic equipment business are performing well, but others are in difficulty. One inorganic business is regarded as non-core, and finally, the surface science operations are losing money.

The collapse in scientific equipment has exposed some

difficulties. He has launched a cost-cutting programme called "funding Fisons' future", designed by consultants from Coopers & Lybrand. Its initial aim is to cut 15 per cent from fixed costs, saving £25m a year by 1996.

Provisions of £10m will be made in 1994 and £5m in 1995 and there should be a net benefit in each year, according to Mr Egan. He insists the company has cleared out the stable and management can now take a firm grip.

But management protests that the pharmaceuticals business is sustainable as open to question. The division's new product, Tisapro, has proved a disappointment in Europe. It has no product in late stage development, and it has not yet been able to license in compounds from other sources.

The obvious answer is a merger or takeover by another company.

One option is for a Japanese drugs group, anxious to acquire development expertise and distribution in the US and Europe, to approach Fisons' board. The timing is awkward though, because most Japanese pharmaceutical companies are struggling with an increasingly difficult domestic market and are strapped for cash.

Nevertheless, with Fisons' share price cheaper than at any point in a decade, a Japanese or western group may be willing to put the Ipswich-based company out of its misery. Otherwise it is difficult to see how this former fertiliser group can escape from the mire.

Lex, Page 16; SmithKline Beecham drug approval, Page 25; Capital Markets, Page 20

Pirelli to float up to half of Australian unit

By Halg Simonian in Milan

Pirelli, the Italian cables and tyres group, is to float up to half its Australian cables subsidiary to raise cash in the recession.

The company will sell up to 50 per cent of Sydney-based Pirelli Cables Australia, which employs about 600 people and expects sales of A\$135m (US\$88.2m) this year.

Pirelli, the world's second highest cables maker, is joining a growing group of companies taking advantage of local circumstances to float their Australian operations. The company did not indicate precise timing, but said the deal would take place within the next six months.

Pirelli justified the decision, in which it is being advised by Baring Brothers, under a strategy to establish a local profile for the operation and provide access to domestic sources of equity.

The Asian telecommunications market is growing extremely fast, and an Australian listing could help to raise additional funds.

The deal could provide a welcome boost to Pirelli's stretched resources during continuing difficulties in the tyre and cables markets.

Saft buys aerospace battery manufacturers

By John Riddling

Saft, the battery manufacturer which is a subsidiary of Alcatel-Alsthom, the European telecommunications, energy and transport group, has agreed to buy the aerospace battery activities of two US groups, Gates Corporation and Johnson Controls, writes John Riddling.

Gates' aerospace batteries division manufactures nickel-cadmium and nickel hydrogen products and employs 130. Johnson Controls, based in

Wisconsin, is a specialist in lightweight, high-powered batteries suitable for use in communications satellites.

Saft, which already has production centres in the US, has annual sales of about \$600m. Its space division recorded sales of \$10m last year, more than half of which came from satellite applications. The company said the planned acquisitions would make it one of the world's largest satellite battery manufacturers with annual sales of about \$17.5m from this activity.

London Electricity lifts interim payout by 32% to 7.4p a share

By Michael Smith in London

London Electricity yesterday announced an increase in its interim dividend, which at 32 per cent was well ahead of any of the other UK regional electricity companies.

London's increase reflects the adoption of a policy which makes it the first regional power company to state an aim to pay a third of the total dividend at the halfway stage. Other electricity distributors tend to aim for 30 per cent.

Analysis increased their dividend forecasts for the full year marginally to about 22.2p. The shares rose initially but closed the day unchanged at 644p.

In the six months to September 30, London made pre-tax profits of \$69.9m (\$104.5m), against \$52m, restated to take in the effects of the new coal contracts. Turnover on continuing operations was down from \$594.3m to \$585m.

Earnings per share rose to 24p from 17.7p and the dividend to 7.4p from 5.6p.

Varde to be split up as deficit rises

By Hilary Barnes in Copenhagen

Varde Bank, Denmark's 10th largest bank with assets of about DKK11bn (\$1.65bn), is being broken up and the healthy business will be acquired by Sydbank Sønderjylland, the South Jutland banking group, Sydbank said yesterday.

Varde Bank, which serves the region of the West Jutland

port of Esbjerg, underwent a financial reconstruction a year ago, when the central bank and the larger commercial banks put up guarantees to enable it to stay in business. But fresh losses this autumn sent the bank's capital adequacy ratio under the Danish legal minimum ratio of 9 per cent and negotiations to find a solution to the bank's problem have been continuing for several weeks.

The final arrangements for winding up the bank will be announced today. An option being considered, according to Varde Bank, is the creation of an asset management company, or "bad bank", to take over the biggest of the bad debts, which are linked to property engagements.

Denmark operates a deposit insurance system to prevent losses for deposits of up to DKK240,000.

Iberdrola holds midway payout

Iberdrola, Spain's biggest private sector utility, will pay a gross interim dividend of Ptas1.25 per share for 1993, unchanged from the previous year, AP-DJ reports from Madrid.

The final dividend for 1993 will be decided at a general shareholders meeting next spring, the company said. In 1992, Iberdrola paid out a final dividend of Ptas30 per share.

ISIN: NO-000-1333694

10 % City of Oslo 1986/1996

(Kingdom of Norway)

NOK 250.000.000

10 % BONDS DUE 1996

Notice of optional redemption

The terms and conditions of the loan give the City of Oslo the option to redeem bonds prior to maturity at a premium on the interest payment date. As a consequence of, and in accordance with this option, the remaining outstanding bonds at the nominal value of NOK 124,990,000, - will be redeemed at 101 per cent as per 15. January 1994.

Bonds earlier drawn for redemption at par but not presented for payment:

83-1/93	5012-1/93	6636-1/93	8006-1/92	9229-1/93	9907-1/93	11628-1/93	13372-1/93	13939-1/93	14411-1/93
114-1/93	3013-1/93	6663-1/93	8007-1/93	9236-1/93	9917-1/93	11606-1/93	13378-1/93	13972-1/93	14412-1/93
116-1/93	3015-1/93	6668-1/93	8010-1/93	9242-1/93	9924-1/93	11608-1/93	13399-1/93	13992-1/93	14429-1/93
154-1/93	3162-1/93	6819-1/93	8011-1/93	9251-1/93	10002-1/93	11636-1/93	13412-1/93	13993-1/93	14440-1/93
26-1/93	5183-1/93	6926-1/93	8012-1/92	9252-1/93	10003-1/93	11894-1/93	13436-1/93	13997-1/91	14462-1/93
268-1/93	3217-1/93	6982-1/93	8037-1/93	9293-1/93	10007-1/93	11893-1/93	13444-1/93	14003-1/93	14466-1/93
275-1/93	3253-1/93	6948-1/93	8041-1/93	9337-1/93	10028-1/93	11973-1/92	13430-1/93	14004-1/92	14467-1/92
329-1/93	3259-1/93	6949-1/93	8046-1/93	9340-1/92	10033-1/92	12003-1/93	13436-1/93	14016-1/93	14468-1/93
398-1/92	3260-1/93	6984-1/93	8051-1/93	9386-1/93	10097-1/93	12071-1/93	13490-1/93	14028-1/93	14492-1/92
399-1/93	3337-1/93	6992-1/93	8086-1/93	9387-1/93	10109-1/93	12093-1/93	13499-1/93	14029-1/93	14734-1/93
400-1/93	3358-1/93	7124-1/93	8093-1/93	9388-1/93	10128-1/93	12133-1/93	13507-1/93	14030-1/92	14824-1/93
414-1/93	3360-1/93	7133-1/93	8098-1/93	9424-1/93	10129-1/93	12159-1/93	13508-1/93	14031-1/93	14825-1/93
447-1/93	3373-1/93	7137-1/93	8104-1/93	9428-1/93	10141-1/93	12140-1/93	13531-1/93	14109-1/93	14873-1/92
4454-1/93	3390-1/91	7165-1/93	8114-1/93	9430-1/93	10170-1/93	12146-1/93	13570-1/93	14110-1/93	14876-1/92
4471-1/93	3392-1/93	7176-1/93	8125-1/93	9435-1/91	10216-1/93	12407-1/93	13575-1/93	14115-1/93	14897-1/92
4513-1/93	3395-1/93	7178-1/93	8160-1/93	9437-1/92	10270-1/93	12446-1/93	13576-1/93	14129-1/93	15035-1/93
4531-1/93	3396-1/92	7331-1/93	8212-1/93	9440-1/93	10281-1/93	12498-1/93	13623-1/93	14180-1/93	15037-1/93
4536-1/93	3397-1/93	7361-1/93	8226-1/93	9442-1/93	10282-1/93	12499-1/93	13626-1/93	14181-1/92	15237-1/93
4542-1/93	3398-1/93	7368-1/93	8320-1/93	9449-1/93	10287-1/93	12603-1/92	13629-1/93	14182-1/92	15267-1/93
4543-1/93	3402-1/93	7412-1/93	8328-1/93	9452-1/92	10293-1/93	12605-1/93	13630-1/93	14183-1/93	15271-1/93
4671-1/93	3506-1/93	7620-1/93	8730-1/93	9454-1/92	10312-1/93	12663-1/93	13637-1/93	14183-1/93	15376-1/91
4694-1/93	3524-1/92	7663-1/93	8733-1/93	9436-1/92	10316-1/93	12663-1/93	13639-1/91	14187-1/92	15378-1/91
4718-1/93	3609-1/93	7668-1/93	8738-1/93	9438-1/92	10319-1/93	12666-1/93	13660-1/93	14188-1/92	15381-1/93
4737-1/92	3570-1/93	7669-1/93	9083-1/91	9463-1/92	10333-1/93	12667-1/93	13661-1/93	14190-1/92	15382-1/93
4738-1/93	3573-1/93	7663-1/93	9088-1/92	9468-1/92	10303-1/93	12928-1/92	13663-1/93	14192-1/93	15385-1/91
4739-1/93	3578-1/93	7666-1/92	9089-1/92	9482-1/92	10687-1/93	13034-1/93	13690-1/93	14194-1/93	15386-1/93
4751-1/93	3672-1/93	7687-1/93	9092-1/93	9498-1/93	10691-1/93	13068-1/93	13711-1/93	14196-1/93	15394-1/91
4775-1/93	3673-1/93	7686-1/93	9093-1/93	9534-1/93	10711-1/93	13069-1/93	13722-1/93	14198-1/93	15395-1/91
4821-1/93	3840-1/92	7813-1/92	9111-1/93	9537-1/93	10713-1/93	13070-1/93	13763-1/93	14202-1/93	15396-1/93
4830-1/93	4083-1/93	7866-1/93	9122-1/93	9539-1/93	10827-1/93	13080-1/92	13812-1/93	14203-1/93	15398-1/93
4833-1/93	4115-1/93	7868-1/93	9130-1/93	9543-1/93	10876-1/91	13088-1/93	13823-1/93	14205-1/93	15403-1/91
4847-1/93	4132-1/92	7894-1/93	9140-1/93	9551-1/92	11114-1/93	13230-1/93	13827-1/93	14246-1/93	15439-1/93
4853-1/92	4160-1/93	7902-1/93	9161-1/93	9553-1/92	11232-1/93	13232-1/93	13828-1/93	14247-1/93	15444-1/93
4856-1/93	4219-1/93	7913-1/93	9183-1/93	9602-1/93	11233-1/93	13261-1/93	13829-1/93	14248-1/93	15430-1/93
4860-1/93	4271-1/93	7944-1/93	9186-1/93	9653-1/93	11238-1/93	13264-1/93	13833-1/93	14251-1/93	15497-1/93
4922-1/93	4354-1/93	7987-1/92	9187-1/93	9660-1/93	11304-1/93	13340-1/93	13843-1/93	14371-1/92	15501-1/93
4983-1/92	4405-1/93	7989-1/93	9203-1/93	9674-1/93	11370-1/93	13362-1/93	13877-1/93	14387-1/93	15541-1/93
5009-1/93	4553-1/93	7992-1/93	9226-1/93	9676-1/93	11411-1/93	13370-1/93	13943-1/93	14398-1/93	15599-1/93
5011-1/93									

The bonds referred to above will become due and payable at 101% and 100% respectively of their principal amount in Norwegian Kroner at the head office of Fiscal and Principal Paying Agent: Union Bank of Norway, Kirkegt. 18, 0107 Oslo, Norway, or at the option of the Holder, at the specified office of any Paying Agent. Bonds should be presented for redemption together with all coupons.

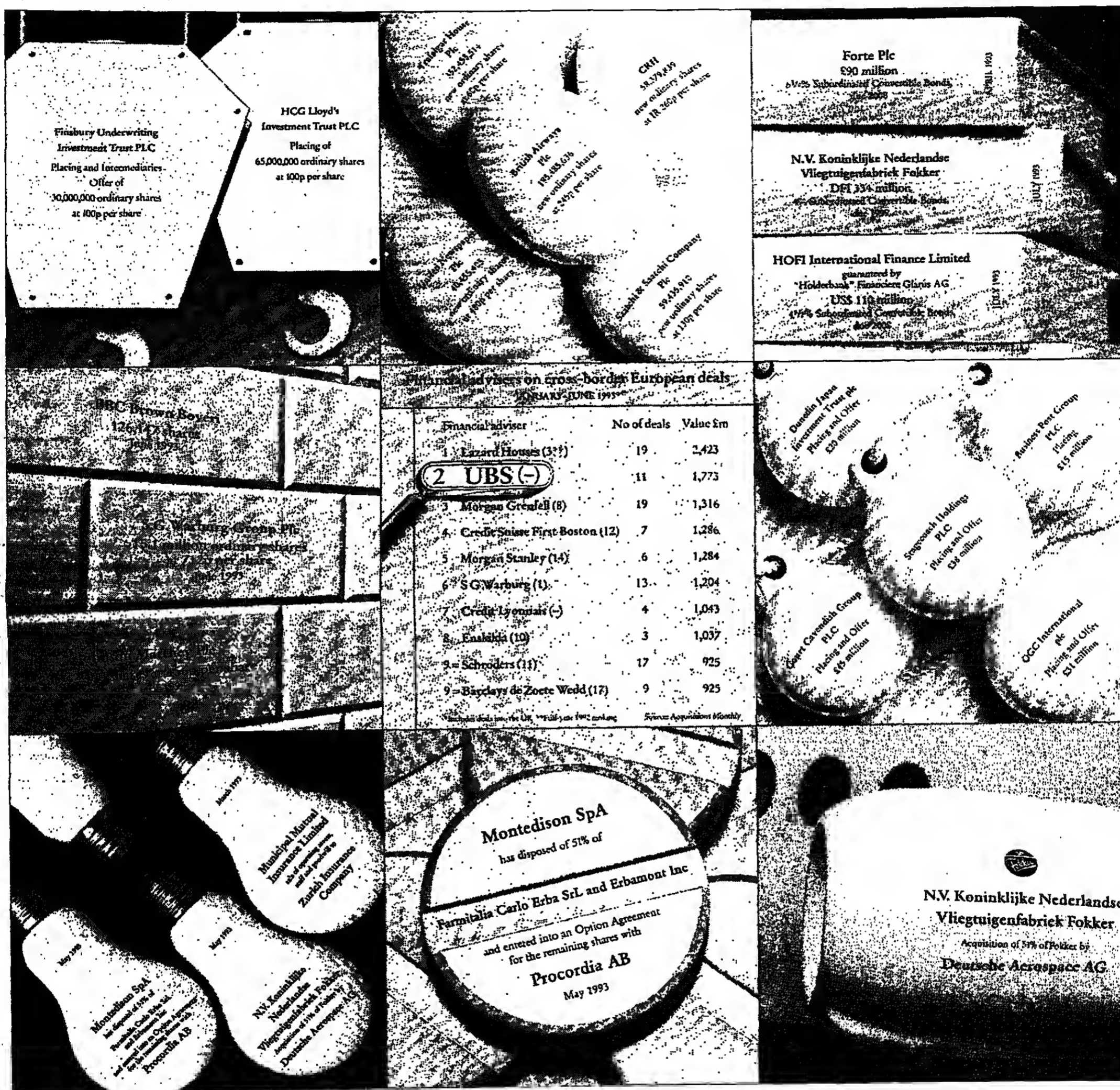
Oslo, 10. December 1993

Union Bank of Norway, Fiscal Agent

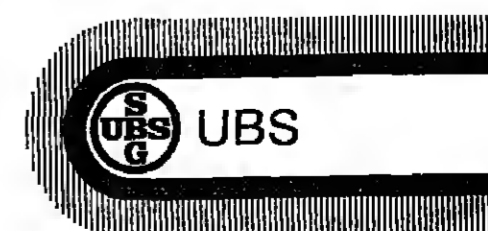
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INTERNATIONAL COMPANIES AND FINANCE

Laidlaw lays plans to sell stake in ADT

By Bernard Simon in Toronto

Laidlaw is issuing an innovative debt instrument that opens an avenue for the Ontario-based waste and transport services operator to dispose of its 24 per cent stake in ADT, the Bermuda-based security and vehicle auction group.

Laidlaw is ADT's largest single shareholder, but the two companies have had a fickle relationship since Laidlaw's former chief executive Mr Michael DeGroot showed his confidence in ADT chairman Mr Michael Ashcroft five years ago by investing in his company.

But Laidlaw has recently signalled its wish to dispose of the ADT stake, which it considers a non-core investment. Mr Ashcroft is due to step down as a

Laidlaw director after next month's annual meeting.

The terms of the \$380m debenture issue give Laidlaw the choice of converting the securities into ADT shares after five years, converting them into Laidlaw stock, or redeeming them for cash.

In the meantime, debenture holders will share any increase in ADT's share price to a maximum of \$12.60, a 40 per cent premium on the existing share price of \$9. Any appreciation above \$12.60 would be exclusively for Laidlaw's benefit.

The crux of the issue's structure is that Laidlaw believes ADT shares are presently under-valued. It is confident that ADT will benefit from a refinancing package, and from bank covenants which preclude it moving away from its

core businesses of security services and vehicle auctions.

"When they do appreciate, we want to share in that appreciation," an official said yesterday. Laidlaw presently values ADT on its books at \$11.69 a share.

The issue does not prevent Laidlaw, however, from selling its ADT shares before the conversion date. If it receives an attractive offer.

The debentures, which are underwritten by a group of Canadian securities dealers, will be issued in two tranches, one denominated in Canadian dollars carrying an interest rate of 6.75 per cent, and the other in US dollars with a coupon of 6 per cent.

The maximum yield, if ADT shares climb to \$12.60, would be 12 per cent a year.



Michael Ashcroft: chairman of ADT who is due to step down as a director of Laidlaw after next month's annual meeting

Drexel Burnham rump sold to Atlanta group

By Patrick Harverson in New York

The DBL Liquidating Trust, handling the disposal of what is left of the defunct investment bank Drexel Burnham Lambert, announced yesterday it was selling New Street Capital, the successor firm to Drexel, to an Atlanta investment group.

It is also liquidating its portfolio of mostly junk bond securities. The Trust said it expected to realise more than \$800m from the sale of the Drexel assets, of which \$200m will come from Green Capital, the Atlanta firm buying the on-going business of New Street, a small merchant bank with 24 staff.

The remainder will come from the sale of New Street's securities portfolio, which consists primarily of junk bonds.

The proceeds will be used to pay the holders of Drexel warrants, most of whom are former Drexel shareholders and who will receive a total of about \$21m, and the investment bank's creditors.

A spokesman for the Trust said it had yet to be decided how the funds from the sale of New Street securities will be distributed among Drexel's creditors.

The disposals represent virtually the final chapter in the story of Drexel. Under the junk bond king Mr Michael Milken, the firm became one of Wall Street's premier investment banks during the 1980s, before the collapse of the junk bond market dragged it into bankruptcy.

Mr Milken served 22 months in a federal prison for violations of securities laws.

After the deals are concluded by the DBL Liquidating Trust, all that will remain of Drexel Burnham Lambert will be a portfolio of illiquid high-yield securities, which is estimated to be worth no more than \$30m.

US companies rev up for multimedia super-highways

By Louise Kehoe in San Francisco

US vice-president Al Gore yesterday praised the formation of a "cross-industry" collaborative group to accelerate development of "information super-highways" - high-speed digital networks that will link businesses and homes throughout the US.

Twenty-eight companies, including AT&T, Apple Computer, Citicorp, BellSouth, Digital Equipment, IBM, Intel, Hewlett-Packard, and Cable Laboratories, the research arm of the cable industry, yesterday announced the formation of the Cross Industry Working Team (CIWT) to "promote and accelerate" an advanced information network.

The national information infrastructure (NII) is an initiative supported by the Clinton administration and a broad range of US industries.

"The NII will provide the foundation for a national transformation in an information-based society, a key element for the US to sustain leadership in the world economy," said Mr Gore, a long-time proponent of information super-highways.

"It is gratifying to see CIWT

bringing together many of the most knowledgeable technology firms in the country to help create a technical vision for the NII. The administration intends to work closely with the CIWT participants in making the NII a reality."

Bellcore, the telecommunications industry-supported research laboratory, yesterday said it would work separately with several companies to develop and demonstrate prototype technologies for the NII.

Bellcore has created a "Collaboratory on Information Infrastructure" to develop prototype software that will make it practical for all people to navigate these networks. The companies involved in Bellcore's Collaboratory include television broadcasters, computer manufacturers and the telephone industry. Lanny Smoot, executive director of the Collaboratory, said: "The technologies we will explore could one day lead to the availability of a vast array of services - electronic shopping malls, collaborative electronic education and distance learning, access to multimedia information, electronic libraries, multimedia messaging, multimedia games, and interactive multimedia entertainment."

Scandinavian tale of the red and the black

Swedish banks needed government help to change colour, reports Hugh Carnegie

Bailing out Nordbanken and Gota Bank has cost the Swedish taxpayer a cool SKr81.6bn (\$9.8bn) and the state has swallowed a further SKr110bn of their bad loans, but their merger, announced last week, was still presented as a success.

Two factors explain the paradox. First, the merger should mark the end of a series of emergency operations mounted over the past year to keep Sweden's banking system afloat. Second, there is general relief that the banking crisis proved neither as expensive nor as prolonged as feared only a few months ago.

"I think we have managed the crisis in the financial system rather well," said Mrs Anne Wihlb, the tough finance minister not usually given to bouts of public self-congratulation.

"It could really have been a disaster, but the problems now seem to be becoming a thing of the past - touch wood."

The marriage of Nordbanken and Gota Bank, which will be preceded by the state's recapitalisation of Gota, is the last in a string of rescue acts performed by the government since a spate of loan losses plunged Sweden's banks into crisis last autumn. The two, which together will have a

leading 24 per cent of Sweden's lending and deposit market, were the hardest hit. Both had to be wholly taken over by the state.

In both cases, direct aid injections were not enough to keep them in business. The Bank Support Authority (BSA), established to manage the

There is general relief that the banking crisis proved neither as expensive nor as prolonged as feared a few months ago

bank crisis, set up so-called "bad banks" to group the bulk of their bad loans. These will stay in state hands and could take as long as 15 years to unwind.

Bad loans worth SKr67bn were lifted out of Nordbanken into a new company called Securum - which required SKr35bn in state capital. A similar operation at Gota Bank will create Retrixa, holding Gota loans worth SKr43bn and needing SKr7.3bn in capital.

In the meantime, the BSA has forked out SKr8bn to Swedbank and SKr2.5bn to För-

eningsbank, bringing to SKr92.1bn the total amount of state aid committed to the banking system.

Some SKr60bn of this has a direct impact on the state budget, exacerbating a deficit which this year runs to more than 13 per cent of GNP. But the government's feeling of relief is understandable when what might have been taken into account.

In May, when the BSA was officially inaugurated, the banking system was still in distress. An application for state aid was still outstanding from Skandinaviska Enskilda Banken, the leading commercial bank and a flagship of the Wallenberg family empire which feared it would fall below the 8 per cent international capital adequacy standard.

Both Swedbank and Förningsbank were also negotiating for further substantial assistance.

But they have all since withdrawn their applications, as the 25 per cent fall in the value of the Swedish krona and tumbling interest rates transformed their earning power over the summer.

Instead, S-E Banken, Swedbank and Svenska Handelsbanken have raised SKr16bn between them to rebuild their

capital bases, mainly from share issues launched in a fast-rising stock market.

Moreover, the government anticipates the final net cost of its bank rescue operation may not be much more than SKr50bn, once it recoups the yet-to-be determined price Nordbanken will pay for Gota

Instead of using the crisis to engineer greater competition, the two banks have had their balance sheets laundered by the state

Bank, the proceeds of the planned privatisation of the merged bank and the sale of assets held by Securum and Retrixa.

The latter hold extensive property claims in Europe and beyond, making the Swedish state one of Europe's leading real estate owners.

There is a lingering question over the Nordbanken-Gota merger. Instead of using the bank crisis to engineer greater competition in the bank sector - and bring in foreign participation, as Mrs Wihlb earlier advocated - the two worst-per-

forming banks have had their balance sheets thoroughly laundered by the state and been set up in a powerful market position. Nordbanken is already back in profit and Gota is set to follow.

Criticism from rival banks has been muted, however. One Stockholm analyst said there was wide acceptance that no one would have benefited from the collapse of Nordbanken or Gota Bank, which could have triggered a general loss of confidence in an already weakened banking system.

Given a continued downward trend in interest rates and the prospect of a modest recovery in the economy next year, the banks appear set to leave the dramas of the past year behind them. All should show a profit in 1994 - a far cry from the red ink in 1992, when losses in the system amounted to SKr50bn. But there is little room for complacency. BSA officials estimate the banks are still carrying problem loans worth as much as SKr100bn, leaving them perilously exposed to any unexpected upturn in interest rates.

The government says it is keeping in place a blanket guarantee to honour bank commitments issued at the beginning of the crisis - just in case of more trouble.

PAINTS & THE ENVIRONMENT: AN INDUSTRY FIGHTS BACK

The Financial Times plans to publish this Survey on

WEDNESDAY, 16th FEBRUARY, 1994

It will be published from our print centres in Tokyo, New York, Frankfurt, Rome and London. It will be seen by Chief Executives and Government Officials in 160 countries worldwide.

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FT SURVEYS

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November, 1993

NOTICE TO THE WARRANTHOLDERS OF EACH OF

MITSUBISHI OIL COMPANY, LIMITED

U.S.\$250,000,000 2 1/2% per cent. Notes due 1994 with Warrants

U.S.\$150,000,000 4 per cent. Notes due 1995 with Warrants

U.S.\$230,000,000 2 1/2% per cent. Notes due 1996 with Warrants

U.S.\$200,000,000 1 1/2% per cent. Notes due 1997 with Warrants

(the "Warrants")

to subscribe for Shares of common stock of

Mitsubishi Oil Company, Limited

and

MITSUBISHI OIL COMPANY, LIMITED

¥30,000,000,000 2 per cent. Convertible Bonds due 2000

(the "Bonds")

Pursuant to Clause 4 (C) of each of the Instruments (the

Instruments) dated 15th March, 1990 relating to the Warrants A,

dated 15th July, 1991 relating to the Warrants B, dated 23rd July, 1992

relating to the Warrants C and dated 23rd July, 1993 relating to the

Warrants D, and Clause 7 (E) of the Trust Deed dated 23rd July, 1993

(the "Trust Deed") relating to the Bonds, notice is hereby given as

follows:

In accordance with the resolutions of the Board of Directors of

Mitsubishi Oil Company, Limited (the "Company") adopted at the

meetings held on 23rd November and 30th November, 1993, the

Company issued ¥47,000,000,000 1 per cent. convertible bonds due

2003 with the initial conversion price of ¥969 per share.

As a result of the above issue, the Subscription Prices of the Warrants

A, B, C and D and the Conversion Price of the Bonds have been

adjusted pursuant to Clause 3 (iv) of each of the Instruments and

Clause 7 (H)(i) of the Trust Deed, respectively, as set forth below:

1. Warrants A:

Subscription Price before adjustment: ¥1,345.50

Subscription Price after adjustment: ¥1,329.80

Effective date of adjustment: 9th December, 1993 (Japan time)

2. Warrants B:

Subscription Price before adjustment: ¥936.90

Subscription Price after adjustment: ¥924.10

Effective date of adjustment: 10th December, 1993 (Japan time)

3. Warrants C:

Subscription Price before adjustment: ¥943.90

Subscription Price after adjustment: ¥932.50

Effective date of adjustment: 10th December, 1993 (Japan time)

4. Warrants D:

Subscription Price before adjustment: ¥1,015.00

Subscription Price after adjustment: ¥999.90

Effective date of adjustment: 10th December, 1993 (Japan time)

5. Bonds:

Conversion Price before adjustment: ¥1,015.00

Conversion Price after adjustment: ¥999.90

Effective date of adjustment: 10th December, 1993 (Japan time)

MITSUBISHI OIL COMPANY, LIMITED

By: The Mitsubishi Bank, Limited

as Principal Paying Agent

14th December, 1993

U.S. \$600,000,000



Malaysia

Floating Rate Notes Due 2009

Interest Rate 5 1/4% per annum

Interest Period 14th December 1993

14th June 1994

Interest Amount per U.S. \$10,000 Note due

14th June 1994 U.S. \$265.42

CS FIRST BOSTON

Agent

These shares having been sold, this announcement appears as a matter of record only.

November 1993



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has sold

3,023,333 shares

in

Metall Mining Corporation

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NOTICE OF OPTIONAL REDEMPTION

News Cayman Investment Limited

150,000 7 1/2% Guaranteed Exchangeable Preference Shares

due 1999

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT pursuant to Condition (C) of the

warrant, at the option of any Preference Shareholder, redemption on 15th March

1994, such Preference Shareholder, together with a sum equal to the

unpaid dividend plus any arrears thereof, to be calculated up to and

inclusive of the date of such redemption, to exercise such option, the

Shareholder must deposit the certificate for the Preference

Shares to be redeemed with the Issuer's Registrar or any Agent during the

period beginning 14th January 1994, and ending 13th February 1994.

December 14, 1993, London

By: Citibank, N.A. (Issuer Services) Paying Agent

CITIBANK

NOTICE OF OPTIONAL REDEMPTION

News Cayman Investment Limited

100,000 5 1/2% Guaranteed Exchangeable Non-Voting

Preference Shares due 1999

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT pursuant to Condition (C) of the

warrant, at the option of any Preference Shareholder, redemption on 15th March

1994, such Preference Shareholder, together with a sum equal to the

unpaid dividend plus any arrears thereof, to be calculated up to and

inclusive of the date of such redemption, to exercise such option, the

Shareholder must deposit the certificate for the Preference

Shares to be redeemed with the Issuer's Registrar or any Agent during the

period beginning 14th January 1994, and ending 13th February 1994.

December 14, 1993, London

By: Citibank, N.A. (Issuer Services) Paying Agent

CITIBANK

Notice to the Holders of Warrants of

MORINAGA & CO., LTD.

U.S.\$130,000,000

4 per cent. Guaranteed Notes due 1995

with Warrants (the "Warrants")

Pursuant to Clause 3 and 4 of the Instrument dated 20th June,

1991 (the "Instrument") relating to the above issue, notice is

hereby given as follows:

Morinaga & Co., Ltd. has made an issuance of Yen 20,000,000,000

1 per cent. Convertible Bonds due 2001 on 6th December, 1993

Japan time, at the initial conversion price of Yen 335 per share

which is less than the current market price per share of Yen 829.9

calculated as provided in the Instrument.

As a result of such issuance and pursuant to Clause 3 of the Instru-

ment, the Subscription Price of the Warrants has been adjusted

from Yen 669 to Yen 655.60, effective as from 7th December, 1993

(Japan time).

MORINAGA & CO., LTD.

By: Dai-ichi Kangyo Trust Company of New York

as Disbursement Agent

14th December, 1993

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Amount :

FRF 504.07 per

FRF 10,000

FRF 5,040.67 per

FRF 100,000

FRF 50,406.73 per

Samsung sees sharp earnings rise

By John Burton in Seoul

South Korea's three main electronics groups - Samsung, Goldstar and Daewoo - yesterday predicted significant increases in earnings and sales for 1993.

Samsung Electronics, the leading group, estimated net profits at Won150bn (\$188m), up 107 per cent. Sales will rise by 38 per cent to Won1,100bn, it said.

The rapid profits expansion is primarily due to Samsung's semiconductor division, which is the world's largest supplier of D-ram memory chips. Strong global demand for D-ram chips

and firm prices have boosted earnings margins this year.

Goldstar estimates that net profits will grow by 126 per cent to Won90bn for 1993. Sales will increase by 16 per cent to Won4,400bn.

Growth was largely due to exports in consumer products, which have been aided by the Korean won's depreciation against the Japanese yen and improved its competitiveness against Japanese electronics manufacturers.

Daewoo Electronics expects that net profits will grow by 26.5 per cent to Won21bn, while sales will rise by 19 per cent to Won2,050bn.

Daewoo has benefited from several popular products in the domestic market, including improved versions of washing machines and TVs, its strongest product lines.

South Korea will become the world's sixth largest motor vehicle producer this year and is expected to become the fifth biggest within the next two or three years.

Korea will produce 2.04m vehicles in 1993, overtaking Spain for sixth place, according to the Kia Economic Research Institute, which is affiliated with the country's second largest car manufacturer. Production of motor vehicles

will rise 17.8 per cent this year, the sharpest increase among the 10 main car producing countries, and exports will grow by 37 per cent due to the Korean won's depreciation against the Japanese yen.

Korea is likely to replace Canada as the world's fifth leading car producer within the next several years.

"Most car factories in Canada are subsidiaries of foreign car-makers and its domestic market is nearly full. Moreover, with the North American Free Trade Agreement, some factories in Canada are expected to move to Mexico, where the labour is cheaper."

MAS share trading halted as speculation of state sale mounts

By Kieran Cooke in Singapore

Speculation about the future of Malaysia Airlines (MAS), increased yesterday with indications that the government is about to sell part of its remaining stake in the airline in a deal worth up to M\$2bn (\$770m).

Share dealings on the Kuala Lumpur stock market in both MAS and Malaysia Helicopter Services (MHS), a small company specialising in support services for the oil and gas industry, have been suspended.

It is widely believed that MHS will be used as the vehicle for the sale of a substantial block of government-held MAS shares.

After a partial privatisation in 1986, MAS is now 42 per cent owned by Bank Negara, the Malaysian central bank, and 5 per cent each by the govern-

ments in the east Malaysian states of Sabah and Sarawak. The Brunei government holds another 10 per cent.

Whether Bank Negara will sell all its MAS shares is still not clear but there are reports of a complex share swap. Analysts say the government is anxious to capitalise on buoyant stock market activity to rid itself of its holding in MAS.

The Malaysian state-controlled airline has been flying through financial turbulence. It announced pre-tax profits for the six months ended September, of M\$34m (\$2.5m), a 96 per cent drop compared to the same period last year.

Analysts say MAS is paying the price for an ambitious fleet expansion programme launched three years ago just as the worldwide airline industry was heading into recession. In the course of its present

five-year plan to 1998-97, MAS has orders for 72 aircraft costing a total of M\$10.6bn.

MHS is controlled by Mr Tajudin Ramli, a leading Malaysian businessman. Mr Tajudin's main listed company is Technology Resources Industries, a group mainly involved in telecommunications.

Mr Tajudin recently announced that through MHS he was taking a 20 per cent stake in World Airways, the US charter carrier.

While the Malaysian government appears anxious to make MAS more competitive and less dependent on state funding, analysts feel that the state will ensure it maintains considerable influence over any new fully privatised entity.

One of Mr Tajudin's backers is believed to be Mr Dain Zaiduddin, one of Malaysia's richest businessmen.

Demand for Taiwanese insurer issue

The Taiwan government's offer of 15m shares of Chung Kuo Insurance was fully subscribed, Reuter reports from Taipei.

Underwriter Chiao Tung Bank said the shares, equal to 15 per cent of the company's stock, were priced at T\$54 a share and would raise T\$812m (US\$36m). More than 1m applications were received, with 9,000 applicants awarded 2,000 shares each, said Chiao Tung.

The Taiwan government eventually plans to give up its majority stake in the group. Chung Kuo is one of three state-owned companies, along with Chiao Tung and Farmers Bank of China, that applied to list last year but postponed the move because of a weak stock market.

A domestic and overseas flotation of shares in China Steel is planned for early next year.

Germans launch blitz on British palate

David Waller reports on expansion plans of Rewe, the food retailer

A German businessman who describes himself as a lover of the UK is setting out on a personal mission - to corrupt the eating habits of the average British family.

"We helped to corrupt the food culture of Germany," says Mr Hans Reischl, the man who has built up the privately-owned Rewe group into Germany's largest food retailer, "and we are hoping to do the same in the UK."

Mr Reischl, who wears English-made shoes and spends two weeks of each year on holiday in the UK, said in a recent interview at the Rewe group's Cologne headquarters that the quality of food in mainstream British supermarkets was too high.

"I want to give the British consumer more choice about

where he or she goes shopping," Mr Reischl declared. "We want to bring greater competition to the UK market. This will inevitably lead to a deterioration of your food-culture."

The process has already begun. Following the purchase of a 26 per cent stake in Budgens, the UK food retailer, Rewe has opened the first eight or nine stores in a planned chain of at least 40 discount food stores.

Modelled on the down-market format which has taken Rewe's sales in Germany to DM33bn (\$19.5bn) last year, these stores offer 1,200 to 1,300 items of stock compared to 6,000 in a normal Budgens store.

Prices will be at least 10 per cent lower than in normal food supermarkets.

"There is no limit to our expansion plans," said Mr Reischl. "If we get the acceptance we expect, there will be a snowball effect throughout the country. We plan to open one or two stores a month next year."

Mr Reischl confesses an enormous personal admiration for the traditional UK supermarket groups.

On his visits, he takes pleasure in walking around the Sainsbury store nearest to his hotel. He says he soon finds himself rapt in wonder at the range and quality of food on offer.

"Every now and again we have tried to introduce up-market food to our German stores, but the German housewife just won't buy filleted salmon," he laments. "Look at

the sandwiches you can buy in an English supermarket - there is no way we could sell them at that kind of price to a German consumer."

He says poorer consumers get a raw deal in UK supermarkets, but philanthropy - bringing cheap food to the poor - plays only a limited role in his thinking. More important is the profit motive.

Rewe, like a number of other German retailing groups to have started opening discount stores in the UK, has its eye on the wide profit margins generated by the big four UK supermarket groups.

UK supermarkets earn up to 7 per cent on sales which compares with 1 per cent earned by the Rewe group. This gap in margins represents a wealth of opportunity for the German discounters.

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Prices for electricity generated by the power of the electricity grid and in England and Wales

Unit hour	purchase	purchase	purchase
contract	1993	1994	1995
0100	24.04	24.24	25.18
0130	24.05	24.24	25.18
0200	24.04	24.24	25.18
0230	24.05	24.24	25.18
0300	24.04	24.24	25.18
0330	24.05	24.24	25.18
0400	24.04	24.24	25.18
0430	24.05	24.24	25.18
0500	24.04	24.24	25.18
0530	24.05	24.24	25.18
0600	24.04	24.24	25.18
0630	24.05	24.24	25.18
0700	24.04	24.24	25.18
0730	24.05	24.24	25.18
0800	24.04	24.24	25.18
0830	24.05	24.24	25.18
0900	24.04	24.24	25.18
0930	24.05	24.24	25.18
1000	24.04	24.24	25.18
1030	24.05	24.24	25.18
1100	24.04	24.24	25.18
1130	24.05	24.24	25.18
1200	24.04	24.24	25.18
1230	24.05	24.24	25.18
1300	24.04	24.24	25.18
1330	24.05	24.24	25.18
1400	24.04	24.24	25.18
1430	24.05	24.24	25.18
1500	24.04	24.24	25.18
1530	24.05	24.24	25.18
1600	24.04	24.24	25.18
1630	24.05	24.24	25.18
1700	24.04	24.24	25.18
1730	24.05	24.24	25.18
1800	24.04	24.24	25.18
1830	24.05	24.24	25.18
1900	24.04	24.24	25.18
1930	24.05	24.24	25.18
2000	24.04	24.24	25.18
2030	24.05	24.24	25.18
2100	24.04	24.24	25.18
2130	24.05	24.24	25.18
2200	24.04	24.24	25.18
2230	24.05	24.24	25.18
2300	24.04	24.24	25.18
2330	24.05	24.24	25.18
2400	24.04	24.24	25.18

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Swiss Bank Corporation

ABN AMRO Bank N.V.

Bayerische Landesbank Girozentrale

Daiwa Europe Limited

Deutsche Siedlungs- und Landesrentenbank

Kidder, Peabody International Limited

J.P. Morgan Securities Ltd.

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Landesbank Rheinland-Pfalz - Girozentrale -

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December 1993

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COMPANY NEWS: UK

Greene King below expectations at £9.6m

By Philip Rawstorne

Depressed conditions in the East Anglian beer market hit Greene King's first half pre-tax profits which, on an adjusted basis, rose 1 per cent to £9.6m.

The result was below market expectations and the shares lost 10p to close at 553p.

The company sells two thirds of its beer volumes in East Anglia, but managed to restrict its sales decline to 1 per cent against a reduction in overall market demand of 7 per cent.

"The region is the most depressed in the country," said Mr Simon Redman, chairman.

"There is little evidence of a pick-up there, though in our new trading areas further south there are now some signs of recovery."

On an FRS 3 basis, pre-tax profits for the six months to October 31 rose 41 per cent to £9.6m, but the figure was distorted by exceptional costs of £2.5m last year for the bid for Morland, the Thames Valley-based brewer.

Mr Redman said that no further move against Morland, in which Greene King retains a 29 per cent stake, was imminent.

"We shall continue to keep our options open," he added.

Trading profit of £12.7m was 5 per cent lower on turnover ahead 4 per cent at £70.2m. Spending on brand advertising increased from £1m to £1.8m.

Apart from difficult trading in its home region, the company faced competitive discounting in the free pub trade.

Profits reflected a slight reverse in volumes and margins, but had debt provisions of £620,000 were in line with last year.

Volumes in the take-home



Simon Redman: little evidence of any pick-up in East Anglia but further south there are now some signs of recovery

market, which accounts for 3 per cent of sales, rose 6 per cent.

Managed pubs, increased to 194 with the acquisition in September of 44 outlets from Bass, improved margins and raised drinks sales 13 per cent and food sales 57 per cent. Food's share of total sales grew from 11 per cent to 13 per cent.

Profits of the company's 676 tenanted pubs were marginally higher in spite of

a decline in beer volumes. Capital spending on pub acquisitions totalled £19m and a further £3.16m was spent on pub improvements, a third of it on the tenanted estate.

Borrowings at the half year end amounted to £99.6m and gearing rose from 34 per cent to 42 per cent.

Adjusted earnings per share came out at 16.4p (16.3p), and the interim dividend is raised 4 per cent to 3.85p (3.7p).

Yorkshire-Tyne Tees set to contain deficit

By Raymond Snoddy

Shares of Yorkshire-Tyne Tees, the loss-making ITV company, rose by 2p to 163p despite the delay in announcing year-end results and the decision to pass the final dividend.

The company also confirmed yesterday that pre-tax losses for the year to September "will not exceed £9.5m".

The share price was almost certainly held up by the fact that the forecast losses were not as large as some analysts feared, and by the interest from London Weekend Television in an agreed takeover.

Mr Ward Thomas, chairman

of Yorkshire-Tyne Tees - a company in which Pearson, owner of the Financial Times, has a significant stake - conceded yesterday that "everybody is talking to everybody", and that included LWT and Yorkshire.

In fact, the Yorkshire board on Friday gave LWT permission to begin due diligence on an agreed bid.

LWT, which is the subject of a hostile takeover bid from Granada - the television, rental and leisure group, is expected to publish a defence document this week.

The company will outline the "quartet" theory in the hope of

finding an alternative to being swallowed up by Granada.

Under the proposals, LWT would take over Yorkshire and Anglia Television would take over Tyne Tees. Under proposed government ownership changes one company can own two licences but no more.

The hope would be that eventually further liberalisation of ownership rules will come, allowing a grand alliance of LWT, Yorkshire, Anglia and Tyne Tees. The shares of those involved changed remarkably little yesterday, with LWT down 4p at 585p and Anglia down 2p at 418p.

Mr Thomas said yesterday

he thought the quartet theory "makes a lot of sense" in that it would balance the growing dominance of Carlton Communications, which has made an agreed bid for Central, valuing the Midlands ITV company at more than £800m.

Mr Gerry Robinson, chief executive of Granada, insists that the offer for LWT - worth more than £600m - is the "cleanest and clearest" and above all is "available now".

All the signs are that Granada is considering a modest "sweetener" to clinch the LWT deal.

Yorkshire-Tyne Tees promised yesterday to announce audited year-end results by the

end of January. The delay came because negotiations with customers on the repayment of oversold advertising time had not been completed.

The final pre-tax loss is likely to be about £8.5m rather than the contingent figure of £9.5m, and it is likely that most of the problems of Yorkshire-Tyne Tees have been dealt with in the 1992-93 accounts, with hopes of a return to profit in the current financial year.

Industry speculation suggests that Yorkshire-Tyne Tees has had disappointing advertising sales in November and December.

See Lex

Losses approaching £15m expected from Chrysalis

By Michael Skapinker, Leisure Industries Correspondent

Chrysalis, the music and entertainment group, is expected to announce on Friday that it incurred losses of nearly £15m in the year to end-August.

The cost of winding down MAM Leisure, the amusement machine subsidiary, is thought to account for more than £10m of the deficit. About £4.5m of losses came from operating activities, of which about £1m is thought to have been lost in continuing businesses.

With the disposal of the amusement machine subsid-

iary, Chrysalis is now concentrating on music, visual entertainment, radio and its Lasgo export business.

Last August, the group officially re-entered the music business, nearly two years after selling its recording interests to Thorn EMI.

Its new label, Echo, is headed by Mr Steve Lewis, former managing director of Virgin Music.

Last September, Chrysalis announced that Pony Canyon, the music division of Fuji-ankel, the Japanese communications group, had agreed to buy a 25.1 per cent stake in Echo for £17.5m (£11.7m).

Johnson Matthey £6m investment

Johnson Matthey, the precious metals technology group, is to build a £6m autocatalyst plant in Malaysia as a joint venture with Hicom, the Malaysian government's industrial investment company.

The plant is part of JM's

plan to increase its penetration of the rapidly growing south-east Asian market, and follows the opening of a \$25m technical centre in Japan in October. It will produce up to 1m autocatalysts, which reduce engine pollution, a year.

DIVIDENDS ANNOUNCED

	Current payment	Date of payment	Current dividend	Total for year	Total last year
Berkeley	1.97	Feb 14	1.65	-	8
Brawley	0.24	Mar 6	0.24	-	0.51
Greene King	3.85	Feb 4	3.7	-	12.3
Hardys & Hanson	5.5	Mar 7	5.1	8.5	7.9
London Elect	7.4	Feb 10	5.8	-	19.5
Mining & Allied	0.75	Mar 3	0.5	0.75	0.5
Radio Clyde 5	6	Feb 9	5.25	9.5	8.5
Richards	1.93	Mar 7	2.93	3	4
Unilever	5.72	Mar 11	11.4	10.1	15.7

Dividends shown pence per share not except where otherwise stated. *On increased capital. \$USM stock. \$Irish currency. †For nine months.

Rising house sales behind 83% surge to £12.6m at Berkeley

By Andrew Taylor, Construction Correspondent

Berkeley Group, one of Britain's most successful housebuilders during the recession, yesterday announced an 83 per cent rise in pre-tax profits to £12.6m during the six months to October 31.

The company's shares improved 20p to 480p on the announcement.

Turnover rose 37 per cent to £103.5m as the number of homes sold increased from 468 to 656. Earnings per share improved 50 per cent to 11p and the interim dividend is lifted from 1.65p to 1.9p.

The company said it had cash in hand of £41.7m at the end of October following its successful £41m rights issue in the spring. That compared with shareholders funds of £187.4m.

Mr Tony Pidgley, managing director, said there had been a modest recovery in the housing market since Britain left the ERM in September last year.

"House prices have recovered by 6 or 7 per cent, the 10 per cent they lost when we left the ERM," said Mr Pidgley. "Demand from purchasers also has increased. Gross margins as a result have risen to about 20 per cent. The prospects for housing are the best they have been for five years."

The rights issue cash is to be used to purchase land for housebuilding. At the end of

Development joint ventures

Berkeley Group yesterday announced details of two new joint ventures.

It has been appointed by Thames Water to build an £80m development at its redundant Barn Elms reservoir in south-west London. The scheme includes a 110 acre wildlife reserve as well as provision for 300 homes.

Berkeley has also formed a joint venture with Higgs & Hill, the building company, to pursue commercial property developments. Schemes will only be financed and developed when they have been pre-let to tenants, said Mr Tony Pidgley, Berkeley's managing director.

October the company owned 4,000 plots with planning permission with a further 1,000 plots which it expected to buy.

Many of these sites were acquired at the bottom of the recession, two years ago, when land prices were cheaper. Mr Pidgley estimated that land prices had risen on average by 30 to 40 per cent during the past 12 months.

He said: "Some of the prices that have been paid have been too high in my estimation. We are pleased that we bought early and therefore are under no pressure to pay these prices."

He expected house prices to rise by no more than 10 per cent with general inflation during the next two years - "maybe no more than two or three per cent a year".

The company was also pleased with the timing of its £130m commercial property joint venture, formed in March

1991 with Saad Investments. This was sitting on a useful profit following property price rises this year.

COMMENT
Berkeley richly deserves its reputation as one of the best managed companies in the sector. If the art of housebuilding is the timing of land purchases, Berkeley has got it right in spades. Having sold its land holdings at the top of the market in 1989 it started buying before prices began to rise sharply. The timing of its commercial property joint venture looks equally impressive. Profits, if the portfolio was sold now, could approach 30 per cent. Group profits, assuming the portfolio is held, could still reach £28m this year and rise to more than £35m in 1994-95. The shares based on yield may look a little expensive but are worth it based on the quality of its management performance to date.

Anglian Water warns of job losses

Anglian Water yesterday announced the first stage in a restructuring of its core water business which is likely to result in a number of job losses next year.

The first to go will be Mr John Simpson, group operations director and managing director of the utility Anglian Water Services.

Mr Simpson, aged 54, announced his early retirement along with the company's statement that it would merge Anglian Water Engineering and Business Services - which provides billing, engineering and computing services - and "cer-

tain support functions" into the regulated business.

His responsibilities will be assumed by Mr Alan Smith, managing director of AWS. Mr Simpson's remuneration, excluding pension payments, was reported in last year's accounts as £120,000.

Mr Chris Mellor, finance director, said it was too early to discuss the level of job losses. "But clearly if we are going to constantly improve our efficiency over time then one of the ways is to gradually reduce our workforce," he said.



Wheelock and Company Limited

Interim Results for the half-year period ended 30th September, 1993

Group Results

The unaudited consolidated profit attributable to Shareholders for the six months ended 30th September, 1993 amounted to HK\$940.3 million, representing an increase of 61.1% over that achieved in the same period last year. Earnings per share were 46.1 cents.

Summary of Unaudited Consolidated Results

Six months ended 30th September:	1993 HK\$ Million	1992 HK\$ Million
Turnover	1,023.6	1,009.4
Operating profit	214.4	108.2
Share of profits less losses of associated companies	851.7	569.6
Profit before taxation	1,066.1	677.8
Taxation (see note below)	(93.4)	(78.6)
Profit after taxation	972.7	599.2
Minority interests	(32.4)	(15.5)
Group profit attributable to Shareholders	940.3	583.7
Interim dividend	(192.7)	(153.7)
Transferred to revenue reserves	747.6	430.0
Earnings per share	46.1 cents	28.5 cents
Interim dividend per share	9.5 cents	7.5 cents

Note:
The provision for Hong Kong profits tax is based on the profit for the period as adjusted for tax purposes at the rate of 17.5% (1992 - 17.5%). Overseas taxation is calculated at the rates of tax applicable in countries in which the Group is assessed for tax. The taxation charge is made up as follows:

Six months ended 30th September:	1993 HK\$ Million	1992 HK\$ Million
Company and its subsidiaries Hong Kong profits tax	15.0	18.9
Associated companies Hong Kong profits tax	77.7	60.5
Overseas taxation	1.1	-
Deferred taxation	(8.4)	0.1
	75.4	60.5
	93.4	78.6

● In announcing its first interim results following the recent change of name from World International (Holdings) Limited to Wheelock and Company Limited, the Group's interim profits amounted to HK\$940.3 million, an increase of 61.1%.

● Wheelock will use its excellent foundation and business goodwill for future business development and investment activities and to take advantage of Hong Kong's role as the bridge between East and West.

● Since the name change, Wheelock Pacific has secured its first investment by taking a 25% stake in the listed Climax International.

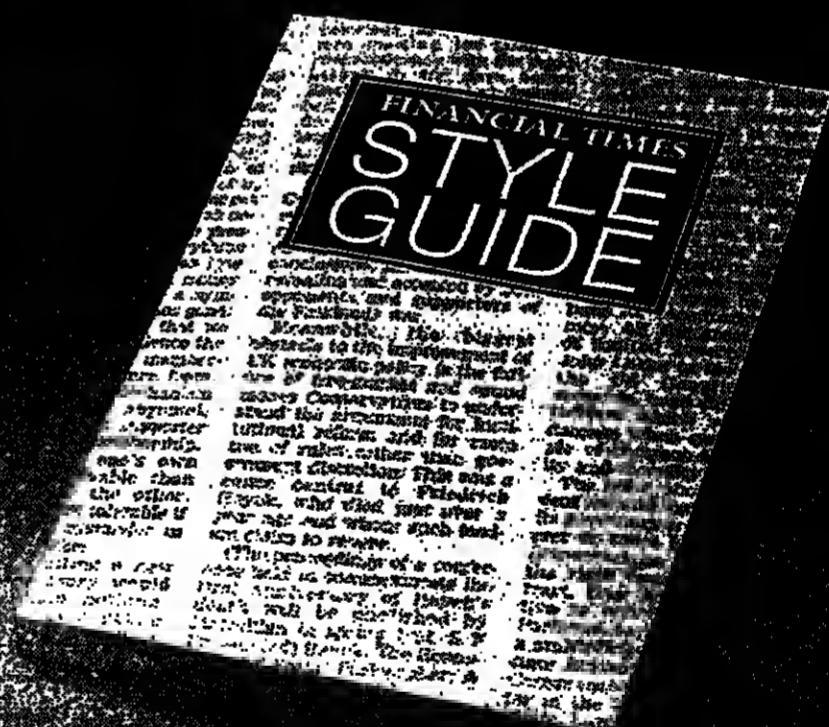
● Wheelock Properties continues to bring development projects to the market and aims to actively enlarge its landbanks in Hong Kong and South China.

● At Wharf, all construction projects are on time and under budget, and Times Square is substantially occupied. Wharf Cable is now an active cable TV business after its recent official launch.

● The Wheelock Group's debt to equity ratio has been well controlled under 10% consistently.

7th December, 1993

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SB wins UK approval for anti-viral drug

By Daniel Green

SmithKline Beecham has launched itself into a new and potentially lucrative health-care field with the approval in the UK of famciclovir, its anti-viral drug.

It has been granted a licence from the UK Department of Health to market the compound under the trade name Famvir for the treatment of herpes zoster, better known as shingles.

It will allow SmithKline to challenge the effective monopoly in anti-viral drugs held by Wellcome, its UK rival.

The business is currently dominated by Zovirax, Wellcome's best selling drug with annual sales of more than \$1bn (\$800m).

Famvir will go on sale to doctors "early next year", said SmithKline.

The company would not comment on the pricing of the

drug, which has to secure approvals in all the world's main drug markets to ensure its ultimate success.

SmithKline has submitted famciclovir in more than 20 countries, with US approval likely next year. About 40 per cent of world sales of Zovirax are in the US; the UK accounts for about 6 per cent.

SmithKline is also seeking approval for the use of famciclovir in treating conditions other than shingles.

Less than one third of Zovirax sales are used in the treatment of shingles; the rest goes on herpes of the face and trunk, genital herpes and chicken pox.

Although Zovirax has effectively had a monopoly in the anti-viral market, this is about to change.

Patents on the drug begin to expire this year, although they remain in force until 1997 in the US, which accounts

for almost half of total sales.

Wellcome has already launched over-the-counter versions of Zovirax as part of an attempt to forestall the effect of competition from generic competition.

Glaxo and Warner-Lambert of the US yesterday confirmed that they have signed agreements under which they will form a joint venture to develop and market over-the-counter versions of Glaxo's prescription drugs.

The joint venture will initially concentrate on developing Zantac, the ulcer treatment that has been the world's best selling drug for several years, for the non-prescription market.

OTC Zantac would probably be sold as a treatment for stomach upsets and will be submitted in 1995 to the US Food and Drug Administration for approval.



Derby winner Nijinsky stands guard over the gates at Epsom

Racecourse stakes comes under orders

By David Blackwell

The race to find a new owner for Epsom racecourse, home of the Derby, began in earnest yesterday as Lazard Brothers, the merchant bank, made available an information memorandum for potential bidders.

Known to be in the running are Racecourse Holdings Trust, a subsidiary of the Jockey Club, and the Racecourse Owners Association.

Epsom is being sold along with Kempton Park and Sandown Park, by the Horserace Betting Levy Board, the statutory body that acquired the courses more than 20 years ago in order to preserve them from possible property developers.

The courses comprise almost 1,000 acres within the M25. Estimates of their value range between £20m and £50m.

Mr Rodney Brack, chief executive of the Levy Board, said that 20 potential buyers had been listed so far, with a small proportion from overseas.

The Levy Board will retain the freehold of the courses, and provide the purchaser with long leases subject to covenants guaranteeing the future of racing. "If a purchaser fails to honour the covenants, the Levy Board will be in a position to take action," said Mr Brack.

United Racecourses, the Levy Board subsidiary that runs the three courses, last year had turnover of £9.9m, of which £2.8m came from non-racing activities.

Racecourse Holdings Trust already owns nine courses, including Cheltenham and Newmarket, and ploughs all its profits back into racing.

The Racecourse Owners Association, which has 4,500 members, in October set up a committee to investigate the possibility of buying the courses. The committee includes Mr David Sieff of Marks and Spencer and Sir Eric Parker, former chief executive of Trafalgar House.

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awarded BS5750 for pension scheme administration, Newbury.

Unidare ahead at £4.49m

Unidare, the Dublin-based industrial group, achieved pre-tax profits of £4.49m (£4.5m) for the nine months to September 30 against £3.5m. For the year to December 1992 the company, which has changed its year end, reported profits of £5.43m.

Turnover increased to £105m (£85.5m), with acquisitions contributing £24.5m. Following the acquisition of Nasso, the group has 18 depots across the US with 4,000 distributor customers.

Earnings per share came through at 19.45p and a final dividend of 5.7p is proposed, making 10.1p for the period.

Calderburn paying up to £10m for specialist supplier

Calderburn, the office furniture group, has paid an initial £2.5m for SBF, a specialist supplier of dealing desks to financial institutions.

Initial consideration comprises a mixture of new shares, cash and loan notes.

In addition, deferred consideration of up to £4.5m is linked to profit targets.

In the three years ended March 31 turnover of SBF had risen from £10.2m to £14.5m and pre-tax profits from £143,000 to £121m.

Calderburn directors believed that the acquisition would significantly improve

the group's growth prospects and enhance earnings per share.

They anticipated that group pre-tax profits for 1993 would be in the order of £2m (£2.83m) after charging non-recurring costs of about £400,000.

It was their intention to recommend a maintained total dividend of 7.7p via the payment of a 4.9p final.

SBF's markets take in the UK, Europe and east Asia.

Shareholders' approval will be sought for the acquisition at an extraordinary meeting convened for December 29.

This announcement appears as a matter of record only.

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COMPANY NEWS: UK

Float proceeds of up to £25m will be used for R&D and expansion

Coda plans listing in new year

By Ian Hamilton Fawzy,
Northern Correspondent

Coda, the Harrogate-based accountancy software designer for standard, mid-range computers, is to seek a main market listing early next year to raise up to £25m.

The bulk of the money will go towards speeding up research and development of new products, and expansion in the US, EU and Asia-Pacific.

Coda's latest results, published yesterday, showed pre-tax profits of £3.75m at the October year-end, a rise of 16 per cent. Turnover rose 31 per cent to £23.5m.

Mr Rodney Potts, chairman, who founded Coda with two friends in 1979, said expansion

so far had been financed by growth. NatWest Markets, the sole outside investor - but with only 7 per cent of equity - was not pressing for an exit.

However, flotation will also help fund an employee share ownership programme to give a stake in the business to as many of Coda's 300 staff who want it. Since the company trades on selling accountancy packages designed by accountants to accountants, Mr Potts sees wider share ownership as an important potential motivator in a competitive market.

County NatWest Ventures bought in eight years ago, when Mr Potts and Mr Chris Lennox, technical director, needed to buy out their co-founder, who wanted to leave.

Coda concentrates exclusively on accounting software, functioning independently of hardware manufacturers but using open systems which can run on IBM, Digital or Hewlett-Packard computers, as well as interfacing with popular relational databases.

Its integrated accounting system runs in more than 1,000 companies in 40 countries. Customers include P&O, Reckitt & Colman, TDK, Catapult, Sears, Nedlloyd and Superdrug.

Business is also growing for accountancy software run on personal computers linked to mainframes or joined into local area networks.

This accounted for nearly £1.5m of last year's sales.

North American sales, where Coda has eight offices, were \$16m (£10.7m), ahead more than 40 per cent. Its Asia-Pacific headquarters is in Singapore with branches in Australia, Hong Kong and New Zealand.

The remaining nine offices are in Europe, where technical obstacles have included different accounting standards and tax regimes, automatic language translation and the need for bigger entry fields in Italy to get all the figures in.

As part of going public, Mr Colin Gaskill, chief executive of 600 Group, and Mr David Eggleston, until 1990 head of corporate information systems for BP, have joined Coda as non-executive directors.

Rebel holders threaten Fife

By Tim Burt

Rebel shareholders at Fife Indmar yesterday threatened to force a financial crisis at the Scottish engineering and distribution company if they failed to win control at an extraordinary meeting this week.

Mr Charles McDonald, a non-executive director and rebel leader, said he would cash in £200,000 of loan notes and probably sell his 8.5 per cent stake - the largest non-institutional holding - if moves to oust the board were voted down.

"They'll have a lot of shares coming on to the market. The price could collapse," he said yesterday.

The warning followed allegations of costly acquisitions and poor financial management at Fife.

Mr Gavin Hepburn, chairman, has dismissed the claims and accused the rebels of publishing inaccurate information about the group.

He also held out the prospect of a threefold increase in the final dividend to 2p if the current board remained in control.

The rebels yesterday pledged to match Mr Hepburn's offer and said they would invest an extra £1m in the company.

Mr McDonald said he had the backing of more than 20 per cent of the private investors, although institutions, which control a total of 45.7 per cent of the shares, have not yet signalled their intentions.

Rise to £7m at Hardys & Hansons

By Catherine Milton

Two new pubs and the refurbishment of some older establishments helped Hardys & Hansons, the Nottingham-based brewer, lift pre-tax profits from £5.87m to £7.04m in the year to October 1.

"We are not beginning to see a recovery here. We could not say the recession is beginning to end," said Mr Richard Hanson, chairman and managing director.

Turnover rose to £31.7m (£30.2m). Mr Hanson said prices had increased in line with the rest of the industry and, stripping out the new premises, volumes were stable.

He said cost pressure had pushed prices up by 4p in September bringing the cost of a pint of bitter to £1.14p in the company's managed pubs.

The company launched three new canned beers in July. Yesterday's figures benefited from these for only three months.

A 9.3 per cent increase in trading profits to £6.32m (£5.78m) was not fully reflected at the pre-tax level. Income from interest and dividends fell from £982,000 to £638,000 as rates fell and funds were invested in the company's estate.

Hardys now has 255 pubs in the east Midlands with about one third directly managed and the remainder tenanted.

About 100 pubs are based in Nottinghamshire, with the same number in Derbyshire.

The board is recommending an increased final dividend of 5.5p giving a higher total for the year of 8.5p (7.9p).

Earnings per share rose to 18.93p (18.64p).

Century Inns makes £4.7m in first year of trading

By Chris Tighe

Century Inns, the pubs operator, recorded pre-tax profits of £4.7m on turnover of £19.8m for the 12 months to end-September, its first full year of trading.

The outcome compared with a pre-tax profit of £1.2m (£2.1m before exceptional start-up costs) in the previous 10-month period, on turnover of £13.1m.

Operating profit for the period under review was £2m, compared with £4.4m (excluding exceptional items amounting to £900,000) for the preceding 10 months.

The company said its performance in its first full year

reflected not only the annualisation effect of purchases during 1992, but also substantial real growth in earnings.

Mr Alistair Arkley, chief executive, predicted "reasonable growth" in pre-tax profits in the current year.

Century, which now has 301 public houses in Yorkshire and north-east England, was founded in November 1991 by Mr Arkley, former managing director of Brent Walker Brewing and Trading, and two senior colleagues.

The three, who between them put in about £250,000, raised more than £60m for their management buy-in from Schroder Ventures, Mezzanine

Management and National Westminster Bank.

The business was launched with the purchase of 185 pubs from Bass, Century, with headquarters in Billingham, Cleveland, now has assets of £52.6m.

Mr Arkley said he believed the company could grow to 500 pubs within its existing management structure.

The anticipated sale of Scottish & Newcastle pubs, following its purchase of Grandhotel's Club & Brewer chain, may give Century a chance to grow, he said.

Century Inns would this year start laying the administrative groundwork for flotation, he added.

Richards deficit cut to £71,000

After a fourth quarter which turned out to be "more difficult than expected" Richards, the Aberdeen-based textile company, ended the year to September 30 with a pre-tax deficit of £71,000.

The outcome, which compared with a loss of £1.98m last year, was struck on turnover down from £71.9m to £67.8m. Of this, acquisitions accounted for £1.75m and discontinued operations for £144,000 (£3.35m).

Positive aspects to the results were a £282,000 gain from the sale of properties, the release of a

1992 provision amounting to £663,000 relating to the withdrawal from linen manufacture and a bomb compensation claim, and a £50,000 profits contribution from Toweropen, acquired in August.

The directors said that Kyle Knitwear had again suffered a significant loss, and this company was now up for sale.

After a tax credit of £201,000 (£750,000) earnings per share came out at 0.54p (5.33p losses). The final dividend is cut to 1.83p (2.99p) making a total for the year of 3p (4p).

Mining & Allied reduces loss to £20,550

Losses at Mining & Allied Supplies, a distributor of precision bearings and power transmission products, were cut from \$164,418 to £20,550 pre-tax over the 12 months ended September 30.

The deficit took account of a £663,812 provision for discontinued activities to conform

with FRS 3 and a £29,577 rise in interest charges to £572,185. The latter mainly reflected additional funding for the purchase of Richard Hough Bearings in June.

Turnover of £24.6m (£18.7m) included an acquisition contribution of £1.7m.

Operating expenses accounted for £6.34m (£4.58m). The dividend for the year is being stepped up from 0.5p to 0.75p as a measure of confidence and group prospects.

Losses per share widened from 0.3p to 0.8p. The directors are proposing a name change to Bearing Power International.

BTG asks SE to investigate shares rise

Business Technology Group has asked the Stock Exchange to investigate the "substantial" increase in its share price following the completion of the pre-marketing of a placing and open offer last week.

The office equipment supplier is raising an unspecified amount at 12½p a share for working capital and to help pay for an acquisition.

BTG said that adverse trading in the third quarter of 1993 had resulted in significant losses, increasing pressure on finances and requiring an immediate injection of equity.

It added that it was in discussions which might lead to a significant acquisition. Yesterday the shares slipped 1½p to 13p.

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for the purpose of funding and maintaining a subordinated loan to
The Dai-ichi Kangro Bank, Limited

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Agent Bank: Dai-ichi Kangro Bank (Luxembourg) S.A.

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December 10, 1993

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Istituto per la Ricostruzione Industriale S.p.A. Invitation for expressions of interest in the acquisition of 100% of the share capital of Ilva Laminati Piani S.r.l.

Istituto per la Ricostruzione Industriale S.p.A. ("IRI"), headquartered in Rome, at Via Vittorio Veneto, 89 with a temporary issued share capital of Lit. 1,873,779,156,000 intends to make available for sale the entire share capital of Ilva Laminati Piani S.r.l. ("ILP"), which is currently being formed, and for this purpose it wishes to receive expressions of interest in the acquisition of the share capital of ILP. ILP will become a subsidiary of IRI following the de-merger of ILVA S.p.A. ("ILVA") in solvent liquidation pursuant to the resolution of the extraordinary shareholders' meeting of ILVA of 31 October 1993, published in the Official Gazette - Second Part, n. 271 of 18 November 1993. The de-merger will result, inter alia, in the incorporation of ILP and the transfer to ILP of net assets for a value of Lit. 1,310,750 million of which Lit. 1,300,000 million by way of share capital and Lit. 10,750 million by way of reserves. ILP will have its headquarters in Rome, at Viale Castro Pretorio, 122 and its principal business activity will be mainly carried out in four production sites: the first one, located in Taranto, is fitted out for fully integrated production of steel and its subsequent transformation into hot and cold rolled coils; the second one, located in Novi Ligure (Alessandria), is specialized in the production of cold rolled and galvanized flat products; the third one, in Turin, produces cold rolled and electro-galvanized flat strips; the fourth one, in Genova Cornigliano, produces galvanized plates. ILP will wholly own, inter alia, the manufacturing subsidiaries Ilva Lamiera e Tubi S.r.l., Ilva Prodotti Industriali S.r.l. and Ilvaform S.p.A. ILP will operate in distribution through the wholly owned Ilva International S.p.A. and Ilva Distribuzione Italia S.p.A. and through other companies they control or have minority interest in.

The consolidated turnover of the ILP group, as at 31 December 1992, was approximately Lit. 5,900 billion. The group's workforce comprises some 18,500 people.

For the purpose of this transaction IRI has retained Istituto Mobiliare Italiano S.p.A. ("IMI") as its financial adviser. Interested parties should direct any enquiry to the following:



Istituto Mobiliare Italiano S.p.A.
Viale dell'Arte 25, 00144 Roma
Attn: Ing. Giuliano Mari
Dr. Livio Cohen - Ing. Claudio Montanari
Tel: +39-6-5959 3758 Fax: +39-6-5959 3064

This invitation is being extended to limited liability companies or similar entities. In the event that two or more parties acting in concert are interested in the acquisition, their expressions of interest will be taken into account only where the above requirements are adhered to by each of the parties and all such parties present themselves as one single potential acquirer.

Parties meeting the above requirements, should register their interest in the acquisition by contacting IMI in writing or by telex, not later than 7 January 1994, requesting a copy of the Information Memorandum on ILP. Upon registration of interest, parties will have to send a copy of their articles of association and of their by-laws; a list of all members of the Board of Directors and of the Board of Auditors; financial data for the last three years or, for parties established more recently, financial data for the available years; for limited liability companies only, a list of the 10 major shareholders with an indication of their relative shareholdings; any other information considered necessary to illustrate the manufacturing, commercial, organisational, and financial position of the parties interested in the acquisition. In the event that two or more parties acting in concert are interested in the acquisition, the documents attached to the request should refer to each of those parties. In cases where expressions of interest are made through intermediaries, such intermediaries are required to reveal the identity of their principals and to provide the above mentioned information in respect of such principals. IRI, at its sole discretion and without any obligation to explain its decision, reserves the right to take any decision concerning the commencement of negotiations or any other relationship with any interested parties.

IMI will send to the interested parties, admitted to the sale procedure, a copy of the Confidentiality Letter which such parties must sign and return to IMI. On receiving back a duly signed copy of such Letter, IMI will send a copy of the Information Memorandum to those parties which have met the requirements set out above and provided all the information required.

IRI, at its sole discretion and without any obligation to explain its decision, reserves the right to withdraw from negotiations with interested parties irrespective of the stage of such negotiations, as well as to modify at any time the procedure and method of sale.

The publication of this announcement and the receipt of expressions of interest do not impose any obligations on IRI or IMI to continue negotiations and do not create any other obligations in respect of the sale of ILP.

This announcement represents neither a public offer nor a solicitation of public savings, under Articles 1 to 18 of Italian Law No. 216 of 7 June 1974 and following modifications and integrations.

This announcement has been approved by SIGECO (UK) Ltd., a wholly owned subsidiary of IMI and a member of the Securities and Futures Authority for the purposes of section 57 of the Financial Services Act 1986.

The shares in ILP have not been and will not be registered under the U.S. Securities Act of 1933, as amended and may not be offered or sold within the United States except pursuant to an exemption from the registration requirements thereunder. The Italian text of this announcement will prevail over any other version.



Istituto per la Ricostruzione Industriale S.p.A.

Invitation for expressions of interest in the acquisition of 100% of the share capital of Acciai Speciali Terni S.r.l.

L'Istituto per la Ricostruzione Industriale S.p.A. ("IRI"), headquartered in Rome, at Via Vittorio Veneto, 89 with a temporary issued share capital of Lit. 1,873,779,156,000 intends to make available for sale the entire share capital of Acciai Speciali Terni S.r.l. ("AST"), which is currently being formed, and for this purpose it wishes to receive expressions of interest in the acquisition of the share capital of AST. AST will become a subsidiary of IRI following the de-merger of ILVA S.p.A. ("ILVA") in solvent liquidation pursuant to the resolution of the extraordinary shareholders' meeting of ILVA of 31 October 1993, published in the Official Gazette - Second Part, n. 271 of 18 November 1993. The de-merger will result, inter alia, in the incorporation of AST and the transfer to AST of net assets for a value of Lit. 400 billion by way of share capital. AST will have its headquarters in Rome, Viale Castro Pretorio, 122 and its principal business activity will be carried out in two sites: one located in Terni mainly for the production of hot and cold rolling and finishing of stainless steel, electrical steel and high carbon steel; the other located in Turin for the cold rolling and finishing of stainless steel. AST will hold majority interests, inter alia, in manufacturing companies (Società delle Fucine S.r.l., Titan S.p.A. and Tubificio di Terni S.r.l.) and in Italian and international service and distribution companies. The consolidated turnover of the AST group, as at 31 December 1992, was approximately Lit. 1,283 billion. The group's workforce comprises some 4,500 people.

For the purpose of this transaction IRI has retained Barclays de Zoete Wadd Limited ("BZW") as its financial adviser. Interested parties should direct any enquiry to the following:

Barclays de Zoete Wadd Limited
Ebogate House, 2 Swan Lane, London EC4R 3TS
Attn: Richard Gillingwater / Andrew Christie Tel: +44-71-623 2323 Fax: +44-71-956 4662
Oscar Mancini (Milan, Italy) Tel: +39-2-63-722 540 Fax: +39-2-63-722 081

This invitation is being extended to limited liability companies or similar entities. In the event that two or more parties acting in concert are interested in the acquisition, their expressions of interest will be taken into account only where the above requirements are adhered to by each of the parties and all such parties present themselves as one single potential acquirer.

Parties meeting the above requirements, should register their interest in the acquisition by contacting BZW in writing or by telex, not later than 7 January 1994, requesting a copy of the Information Memorandum on AST. Upon registration of interest, parties will have to send a copy of their articles of association and of their by-laws; a list of all members of the Board of Directors and of the Board of Auditors; financial data for the last three years or, for parties established more recently, financial data for the available years; for limited liability companies only, a list of the 10 major shareholders with an indication of their relative shareholdings; any other information considered necessary to illustrate the manufacturing, commercial, organisational, and financial position of the parties interested in the acquisition. In the event that two or more parties acting in concert are interested in the acquisition, the documents attached to the request should refer to each of those parties. In cases where expressions of interest are made through intermediaries, such intermediaries are required to reveal the identity of their principals and to provide the above mentioned information in respect of such principals.

IRI, at its sole discretion and without any obligation to explain its decision, reserves the right to take any decision concerning the commencement of negotiations or any other relationship with any interested parties.

BZW will send to the interested parties, admitted to the sale procedure, a copy of the Confidentiality Letter which such parties must sign and return to BZW. On receiving back a duly signed copy of such Letter, BZW will send a copy of the Information Memorandum to those parties which have met the requirements set out above and provided all the information required.

IRI, at its sole discretion and without any obligation to explain its decision, reserves the right to withdraw from negotiations with interested parties irrespective of the stage of such negotiations, as well as to modify at any time the procedure and method of sale.

The publication of this announcement and the receipt of expressions of interest do not impose any obligations on IRI or BZW to continue negotiations and do not create any other obligations in respect of the sale of AST.

This announcement represents neither a public offer nor a solicitation of public savings, under Articles 1 to 18 of Italian Law No. 216 of 7 June 1974 and following modifications and integrations.

This announcement has been approved by BZW a member of The Securities & Futures Authority for the purposes of section 57 of the Financial Services Act 1986.

The shares in AST have not been and will not be registered under the U.S. Securities Act of 1933, as amended and may not be offered or sold within the United States except pursuant to an exemption from the registration requirements thereunder. The Italian text of this announcement will prevail over any other version.

London Electricity jumps 34%

By Michael Smith

London Electricity's airport distribution network, bought from BAA in March, helped the company lift pre-tax profits by 34 per cent to £89.5m in the six months to end-September.

The airports arm made an operating profit of £6.3m in the half and the company expects a contribution of about double that for the full year.

Mr Roger Urwin, chief executive, said the business was a long term investment which would make increasing contributions to earnings.

London Electricity was also helped in the half year by its decision to withdraw from retailing. Losses in the operation were eliminated, whereas in first half of last year they were £4.8m.

The company's aim of reducing its payroll by 2 to 3 per cent a year was exceeded in the first half when staffing fell by 453 to 5,212, with the help of the retail disposals. Reductions in the core business amounted to 161.

The company has cut 1,500 jobs since privatisation, 1,000 of them in the core businesses.

COMMENT

The 32 per cent dividend increase is rather more spectacular than it may seem. Assuming the company sticks to its line of paying two thirds of the full year payment in the second half then the total of 22.2p will be only fractionally higher than the market was already expecting. Nonetheless, there was enough in yesterday's results to justify the recent rise in the

share price. They demonstrate the value of getting out of retailing at a time when some other regional companies are struggling to justify persevering in it. The move into the airports company, the most significant acquisition by any ree, also looks astute as it will provide growing earnings in a safe, if dull, business which London is well qualified to run. At group level, yesterday's managerial appointments also represent a significant strengthening of the board. The shares are trading on a prospective yield of about 4.3 per cent. That seems about right this side of the regulator's review of the ree's distribution businesses. The market remains nervous about London's relatively high cost base and its task is to persuade the regulator that the costs are entirely a result of operating in the capital.

Standard Life new premiums top £2bn

By Alison Smith

Standard Life, one of the UK's largest insurance companies, said yesterday that its new premium income in the UK over the year to November 15 had increased by 20 per cent to £2.08bn.

It said that continuing increases in single premium investment had more than compensated for the trend away from annual premium business.

In both annual and single premium products, however, the amount of new business in individual pensions was lower than in the previous 12 months.

New business from annual premium individual pensions was down 4 per cent to £66m, while from single premium individual pensions it was down 9 per cent to £46m.

Individual pensions were the only single-premium products to record a fall in new business.

Standard Life said that the personal pensions market as a whole had been affected by the recession, with people giving priority to meeting their day-to-day needs rather than longer-term saving.

There was a sharp increase in new investments into Standard Life's investment funds, which more than doubled over the year from £190m to £467m.

Standard Life attributed this to the return of confidence to the stock market as well as its own investment record.

The company said that 65 per cent of its new business came from financial intermediaries, with the rest coming from tied agents and the small direct sales force. It is building up now that its "tie" with the Halifax Building Society, the UK's largest, is to be broken.

Including business in Canada and the Republic of Ireland, Standard Life's new premium income rose 15 per cent to £2.3bn.

Dutch group may snooker European Leisure plans

By David Blackwell

A Dutch investment company with a large stake in European Leisure, the debt-laden snooker hall and discotheque operator, is opposing the board's restructuring plans as "evidently unfair".

Van Heyst Investments, which has 11 per cent of European Leisure's preference shares and 3 per cent of the ordinary equity, has written to 19 other preference shareholders urging them to vote against the proposals. Mr Henk van Heyst, director of Van Heyst Investments, believes that the 20 groups represent 95 per cent

of the preference shares. He said yesterday that so far he had had no response.

European Leisure needs 75 per cent of the votes cast at its meeting in Dublin next Tuesday for the restructuring to proceed. Under the proposals the banks could end up with as much as 71 per cent of the company in four years' time.

Mr van Heyst accepts that the banks will get the biggest stake, but believes the preference shareholders, whose claim on the current equity is about 80 per cent, are getting a raw deal. They would, he said, end up with only 27 per cent of the equity not held by the

banks, compared with 63 per cent for the ordinary shareholders.

Separately, Mr Maurice Cresswell, a private investor with 1m ordinary shares, has written to Mr Clive Bastin, European Leisure chairman, criticising the group's proposals as "utterly astounding and totally unacceptable".

Mr Ian Rock, European Leisure chief executive, said yesterday that the group had sought to balance within the restructuring proposals the interests of all parties. "We are hopeful of persuading all classes of shareholder to vote in favour."

NEWS DIGEST

Radio Clyde advances to £3m

Radio Clyde, the USM-quoted broadcaster, turned in a near-threefold increase in pre-tax profits from £1.08m to £3.08m for the year to end-September.

The improvement was achieved on turnover up 12 per cent to £14.6m (£13m), and included exceptional credits amounting to £816,000 - against £738,000 costs last time. Comparisons were restated in accordance with FR3.3.

The bulk of the exceptional credit arose from the disposal of about 50 per cent of the company's 25.6 per cent investment in Satellite Media Services.

An increased final dividend of 6p is proposed, for a total of 9.5p (8.5p). The distribution comes from earnings per share of 24.7p against 5p - restated under FR3.3 from 13.2p.

The company intends to change its name to Scottish Radio Holdings.

Strong growth lifts Norbain shares

Shares of Norbain jumped 21p to 290p yesterday after the expanding USM-traded security products group built upon a strong showing last year with a buoyant interim performance.

Profits before tax for the six months to October 31 amounted to £724,000, against £224,000, reflecting good growth throughout the group, according to Mr John Nicol, chairman. Turnover was £15.5m (£7.62m), including a contribution of £4.37m from acquisitions.

Earnings per share were 6.89p (2.16p) basic and 6.59p (2.1p) fully diluted.

Ewart chairman resigns suddenly

Mr Derek Tugan has resigned suddenly as chairman of Ewart, the Northern Ireland-based property company. No explanation has been given.

The board will meet to decide on a new chairman "in due course" but no date has been set.

Brasway improves 27% to £420,000

A 27 per cent improvement in pre-tax profits from £330,000 to £420,000 was achieved by Brasway in the six months to October 30.

Following its further redirection into value added products, the group now has two main divisions, Europower (hydraulic hoses and couplings) and Excalibur (industrial and automotive lubricants).

Turnover fell to £15.5m (£16.4m) but trading profits advanced to £324,000 (£576,000).

Earnings per share rose from 0.28p to 0.38p and the interim dividend is held at 0.24p.

Hamlet rises 32% to £2m

Profits of Hamlet Group, the clothes importer which obtained a stock market listing in October, rose from £1.52m to £2m pre-tax for the half year to September 30.

The 32 per cent improvement was achieved on the back of a 16 per cent rise in turnover to £30.5m. Interest charges were cut to £263,000 (£324,000) but tax took £177,000 more at £820,000.

Earnings per share emerged at 4.41p (3.51p). There is no interim dividend but, as referred to in the flotation prospectus, a final will be payable in September 1994.

Mr John Lusher, an ex-director of Marks and Spencer, has joined the board as a non-executive director.

Flats purchase for Frognore

Frognore Estates, together with British Estate Estates, has acquired a portfolio of 15 blocks of flats from Liverpool Victoria Friendly Society for £23.7m cash.

The portfolio comprises 650 rented flats. Following completion of the purchase, Frognore will own 11 of the blocks, consisting of 497 flats acquired for

Tiphook delays interim statement

Tiphook, the container leasing and transport rental group, said its half-year results would be announced "rather later" than usual because of talks about the possible sale of its container division to Transamerica, the US financial services and leasing group.

The UK group normally reports its mid-term results in December.

Tiphook's operating container fleet in November stood at 491,633 20 ft equivalent units, down 3,975 on October's level.

November's average utilisation was 81.98 per cent, against 82.31 per cent.

Management buys Druid Systems

Management of Druid Systems, the information technology consultancy, has bought the 75 per cent of the group it did not already own in a £2.5m deal.

Equity for the deal is provided by Candover Investments, Candover 1991 Fund and Phoenix Development Capital Fund.

Hays buys agency for £5.1m

By Andrew Bolger

Hays, the business services group, has reaffirmed its faith in the reviving recruitment market by paying £5.1m for Modus Holdings, a specialist agency which provides information technology staff.

Modus, which has two branches north of London, provides computer systems, programming and operating staff. The management will stay with the business.

Hays said Modus would fit well with its Accountancy Per-

sonnel business, which has 120 branches providing accountancy placements and is part of the group's personnel services division. Client contact within both businesses was with finance directors and there would be opportunities to cross-market client databases and expand Modus through the Hays personnel network.

Hays' operating profits from personnel plunged from £18m in 1990 to just £4.8m two years later, but the division showed a 40 per cent recovery to £6.7m in the year to June 30.

Mr Ronnie Frost, executive chairman, said the recruitment market was continuing to make steady progress. "Every single week is better than the last on tempo, and permanent staff are beginning to show."

Modus made operating profits of £950,000 on sales of £13.9m in the 11 months to December 10. Hays has acquired the share capital for £2.7m and assumed debt of £2.4m.

The consideration consists of £2.04m in loan notes, £540,000 in cash and £120,000 through issuing 45,045 Hays shares.

Booth Industries closes division

By Nigel Clark

Booth Industries Group is pulling out of structural steelwork with the loss of two thirds of its workforce following continued weakness in the company's markets.

However, Mr Robin Booth, managing director, said the move was not final and the company would re-enter the market when conditions allowed. He added that the decision would not take effect for three months when the present order book ran out.

The announcement accompanied interim results showing further pre-tax losses of £377,970 (£110,043 profits) after a fall into the red in the second half of the previous year. Turnover fell from £12m to £7.97m.

Full provision for the withdrawal would be made in the full year accounts, amounting to the greater part of retained reserves. The company said these would be replaced by the sale of tangible assets "which had been held for many years".

Mr Booth declined to identify the assets but thought there would be no problem in realising sufficient funds to cover

the provisions and leave cash for expansion.

The Bolton-based company will be left with its provision of high specification doors and fire engineering equipment.

The company blamed the steelwork side for the losses in the six months to September 30. Mr James Booth, chairman, said the group had been restricted to working on contracts in an "intensely competitive domestic market".

Losses per share came out at 9.45p (1.64p earnings). The interim dividend is passed (0.7p).

INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC INDICATORS: BALANCE OF PAYMENTS

Trade figures are given in billions of European currency units (ECU). The ECU exchange rate shows the number of national currency units per ECU. The nominal effective exchange rate is an index with 1985=100.

UNITED STATES					JAPAN					GERMANY					FRANCE					ITALY					UNITED KINGDOM				
Exports	Imports	Current account balance	ECU exchange rate	Effective exchange rate	Exports	Imports	Current account balance	ECU exchange rate	Effective exchange rate	Exports	Imports	Current account balance	ECU exchange rate	Effective exchange rate	Exports	Imports	Current account balance	ECU exchange rate	Effective exchange rate	Exports	Imports	Current account balance	ECU exchange rate	Effective exchange rate	Exports	Imports	Current account balance	ECU exchange rate	Effective exchange rate
1985	279.8	-174.2	-162.5	0.7823	100.0	230.8	78.0	64.5	180.50	100.0	242.8	33.4	21.7	2,226.0	100.0	133.4	-3.6	-0.2	6,794.2	100.0	103.7	-18.0	-3.4	1,432.0	100.0	132.4	-5.7	0.7	0.5880
1986	230.9	-140.8	-182.7	0.8638	102.2	211.1	82.2	66.9	183.11	124.4	244.8	33.4	40.3	2,127.9	102.8	127.1	0.0	0.0	6,735.8	101.8	90.4	-2.5	-1.4	1,461.8	101.4	108.3	-1.2	0.1	0.5705
1987	200.2	-131.8	-145.0	1.1641	70.3	187.3	86.1	75.5	195.33	133.2	254.3	58.8	39.8	2,070.0	113.3	125.3	-4.8	-3.7	6,928.5	103.0	100.7	-7.5	-2.1	1,494.3	101.2	112.3	-18.4	-6.4	0.7047
1988	272.5	-100.2	-107.5	1.1833	86.0	215.8	80.7	86.8	151.51	147.3	272.6	61.6	42.9	2,073.9	114.8	141.9	-3.9	-3.4	7,035.4	100.8	108.3	-8.8	-8.0	1,538.8	97.8	120.9	-32.3	-24.4	0.6543
1989	330.2	-98.3	-82.2	1.1017	88.4	245.3	70.5	52.4	151.87	141.9	310.2	65.3	52.3	2,068.1	112.5	162.9	-6.3	-3.6	7,018.8	99.8	127.8	-11.3	-17.0	1,509.2	98.8	137.0	-36.7	-32.3	0.6728
1990	309.0	-78.3	-72.1	1.2745	85.1	220.0	50.1	28.3	183.94	128.0	323.8	51.8	37.2	2,053.7	119.1	170.1	-7.2	-7.2	6,920.2	101.8	133.8	-9.3	-18.0	1,523.2	100.6	142.3	-29.3	-25.3	0.7150
1991	340.5	-63.5	-4.7	1.2381	84.5	247.4	63.1	62.9	184.44	137.0	327.4	11.2	-18.2	2,040.6	117.7	175.4	-4.2	-4.9	6,964.3	102.7	137.0	-10.5	-17.1	1,531.3	98.9	147.7	-14.7	-9.1	0.7020
1992	345.8	-64.1	-57.2	1.2857	82.9	294.8	107.8	89.8	184.03	142.9	330.6	18.8	-18.5	2,078.7	121.2	182.5	-4.4	2.7	6,842.0	106.0	137.9	-8.0	-20.8	1,591.5	95.7	145.1	-18.7	-18.2	0.7359
4th qtr.1992	315.1	-17.4	-18.7	1.2858	84.2	65.2	28.8	24.8	153.57	143.7	82.2	3.4	-4.1	1,869.3	125.0	45.8	1.3	2.2	6,852.9	109.3	34.8	0.0	-3.8	1,719.4	87.1	34.6	-5.4	-4.4	0.8015
1st qtr.1993	35.1	-21.8	-18.7	1.1820	88.4	72.4	23.8	26.3	132.78	172.4	74.8	7.1	-2.8	1,953.0	124.0	42.9	2.3	1.5	6,807.7	110.0	32.4	0.7	-2.4	1,638.8	80.5	37.6	-3.8	0.6017	78.5
2nd qtr.1993	95.3	-25.4	-22.3	1.2098	84.3	73.4	29.0	26.3	132.78	172.4	74.8	7.1	-2.8	1,953.0	124.0	43.8	3.1	3.1	6,811.8	106.7	36.7	3.8	2.3	1,814.2	81.2	37.7	-3.9	0.7982	80.2
3rd qtr.1993	99.6	-27.4	-	1.1443	85.4	79.8	31.8	28.0	126.89	183.7	79.8	31.8	-8.1	1,918.0	123.9	44.1	3.7	6.808	106.4	36.7	3.8	2.3	1,814.2	79.8	40.5	-3.1	0.7605	81.0	
November 1992	30.5	-6.3	n.a.	1.2372	85.1	22.1	9.1	9.3	153.22	150.3	28.8	0.8	-0.3	1,963.4	124.0	15.1	0.10	0.27	6,642.8	109.0	10.8	-1.2	-2.4	1,687.0	88.7	11.5	-1.7	-1.35	0.8100
December	31.8	-6.6	n.a.	1.2381	85.3	21.7	8.8	7.9	153.57	150.7	28.7	0.0	-2.5	1,958.1	125.3	15.4	0.93	1.46	6,799.3	108.8	11.6	1.1	-0.4	1,747.6	85.8	11.5	-2.4	-2.03	0.7978
January 1993	30.8	-6.3	n.a.	1.2132	86.4	23.0	8.8	7.4	151.67	151.8	25.4	1.4	-2.7	1,959.2	125.3	13.9	0.53	0.82	6,843.7	106.7	9.7	0.5	-1.9	1,609.3	82.5	12.6	-1.4	n.a.	0.7809
February	31.2	-6.7	n.a.	1.1838	86.7	23.8	10.5	8.4	142.87	159.2	27.4	1.5	-1.9	1,943.7	125.8	14.7	0.78	0.49	6,858.8	110.3	11.0	0.4	-0.0	1,633.6	80.6	12.4	-1.3	n.a.	0.8179
March	33.0	-6.9	n.a.	1.1788	86.2	25.5	10.4	13.8	138.81	164.4	24.0	1.8	0.8	1,839.9	125.7	14.3	0.38	0.65	6,851.8	103.8	11.7	-0.0	-0.5	1,678.4	78.5	12.4	-1.3	n.a.	0.8081
April	31.5	-6.3	n.a.	1.2214	84.8	24.0	9.9	9.2	187.17	167.8	25.5	1.7	-2.3	1,948.3	125.8	14.3	0.89	0.40	6,887.5	110.3	11.8	1.1	0.3	1,671.4	79.0	12.3	-1.5	n.a.	0.7894
May	32.0	-6.9	n.a.	1.2101	83.9	25.5	10.1	9.1	134.15	171.0	24.6	2.7	-0.7	1,954.8	124.1	15.1	1.60	2.52	6,863.8	109.8	12.4	1.2	0.9						

COMMODITIES AND AGRICULTURE

Talks on European zinc output cuts 'encouraging'

By Kenneth Gooding, Mining Correspondent

European zinc producers are still on course to implement a scheme to eliminate substantial over-capacity by the permanent closure of one or two smelters next year. The cost of the so-called "shut-down" scheme would be met by the European industry as a whole.

A weekend meeting between

senior industry executives in Brussels made good progress, it was suggested yesterday. A draft agreement was discussed in detail and this set out the terms and obligations for each individual company taking part in the shut-down scheme, said Eurometals, the European non-ferrous metals association.

Discussions with the European Union authorities had

also been "encouraging" - EU approval is needed before the proposals can be implemented.

One industry executive said there was "genuinely constructive discussion" during the weekend talks and the metals market had been wrong to assume that an instant decision would be possible. "These things take time," he said.

The producers are to meet again in mid-January.

Finnish technology to clean up Russian smelter's emissions

By Kenneth Gooding

Pollution from the Kandalaksha aluminium smelter in Russia will be substantially reduced by an upgrading to be carried out by Kumaera Corporation, a Finnish engineering company, using technology from Reynolds Metals of the US.

The project, which is to cost less than US\$50m, will also boost Kandalaksha's capacity from 60,000 to 70,000 tonnes a year.

Kumaera suggests that this is the first environmental modernisation project for a complete aluminium smelter in Russia since privatisation of the industry started there.

The Finnish government will give some financial support to the project because Kandalaksha is on the Kola Peninsula and some of its fluoride emissions are blown across the border into Finland.

Reynolds has well-tried technology to improve the performance of outdated Söderberg smelters and Mr Vesa Kumpulainen, Kumaera's chief executive, says this technology not only cuts pollution substantially but also saves energy.

Once the project has received Russian government approval, the work is expected to be completed in 30 months.

The Russian government is recommending that its aluminium industry should make good across-the-board production cuts of 10 per cent, Mr Alexander Delneko, deputy head of the Russian industry department, said, Reuters reports from Moscow.

He admitted, however, that he did not know how the newly-independent producers of most of the smelters are now joint-stock companies - would react to this official recommendation, which follows meetings with officials from other aluminium-producing countries in Washington.

Another official, Mr Ruben Petrosyan, head of Rasmolport, Russia's aluminium export organisation, said all the countries were considering a 10 per cent production cut and an accord might be reached at talks in Brussels on January 13.

The New York Mercantile Exchange, the big energy futures market, is planning to revive a failed aluminium futures contract in an effort to capitalise on price risks created by the world oversupply of aluminium, writes Laurie Morse in Chicago.

Mr Rappaport, the chairman of Nymex, said that he hoped to launch aluminium futures in conjunction with his exchange's proposed merger

with New York's Commodity Exchange, the precious metals futures exchange, would go ahead with the project even if the merger failed.

Nymex, best known for its successful crude oil futures and options, also trades platinum futures. Mr Rappaport said that if the foray into aluminium was successful, the exchange would attempt to establish trading in zinc and nickel futures.

The exchange's board members are scheduled to vote on the \$50m Comex merger package this week. If the plan is cleared by the board, it must then be approved by Comex directors and presented for approval to the memberships of both exchanges. Comex's volume and asset values have jumped this year in the wake of the 1993 gold rally, causing some members to question the value of the merger and putting the outcome of the plan in doubt.

Mr Rappaport promised Comex members that he would invest heavily in a new aluminium contract if the merger was approved.

Comex launched an aluminium futures contract in 1984, but volume was thin from the outset and it last traded in November 1990. The exchange formally delisted the contract this year.

US floods wash up winners as well as losers

While some farmers' crops were devastated others flourished, writes Laurie Morse

Farmers are always subject to the vagaries of weather, but this year in the US mother nature was more fickle than usual, flooding grain crops in the Midwest and visiting drought on the south-east. Within the affected areas neighbours had sharply different fates: a farmer on high ground in Iowa could boast a record maize crop while his lowland colleague was wiped out by a swollen river.

There was a real dichotomy of winners and losers. That is the real outcome of a year like this one, says Mr Alan Barkema, agricultural economist with the Kansas City Federal Reserve.

The harsh weather reduced the US maize harvest, the largest crop in the US, to 6.4bn bushels (162m tonnes), 30 per cent below the record 1992 harvest. Soyabean production dropped 19 per cent, to 1.8bn bushels, according to the US Department of Agriculture's latest estimates. The harvest shortfall leaves the US with just enough feedgrains to meet this year's domestic and export needs, and very little carryover to cushion any problems with the 1994 harvest.

While analysts are busy counting bushels and fretting over grain supplies, farmers who escaped disaster are enjoying their best year ever. Net farm income is forecast to rise to a record \$95bn in 1993, and thanks to the drawdown in grain stocks, the premium for grain is at its highest since the first fencepost-to-fencepost next year, eliminating acreage set-aside programmes for the first time since supply-management farm programmes were initiated in 1981.

As a result, Mr Bob McElroy,



Many crops were wiped out as river banks burst, but survivors are earning bumper profits

a financial analyst with the Agriculture Department, estimates that net cash farm income in 1994 will be very close to the 1993 record. The three-year streak of farm prosperity, he explains, stems from the boom-and-bust nature of the crop sequences.

The 1992 maize harvest was huge, giving farmers more grain to sell, but at low prices. As crop conditions worsened in the first half of this year, grain prices rose, allowing farmers to market stocks at high prices. Mr McElroy, like many other analysts, expects prices to remain firm through the first half of 1994, benefiting farmers who still have grain to sell.

In addition, the \$2.5bn in disaster relief payments

authorised for farmers by congress have begun to trickle into farm communities, partly offsetting the estimated \$5bn in crop losses suffered this year.

With more land coming into production next year (some 80m acres will be planted to maize) and with ample moisture remaining in midwestern soils, there is a chance for a bumper harvest next summer. However, a good crop is far from certain. Agronomists say the after-effects of flood-damaged soil, soggy fields and disabled equipment could delay spring plantings along midwestern rivers and provide enough uncertainty to continue to support world grain prices.

In the meantime, seed, and

fertiliser producers are gearing up for a busy spring and farmers who have reaped profits are becoming re-acquainted with their tractor and combine harvester dealers. US tractor sales were up 9 per cent in the year to October and the nation's top tractor makers - Deere and Company and the J.I. Case division of Tenneco - have boosted production in the fourth quarter.

Deere reported fourth quarter profits of \$103.5m, this week up from \$42m last year, with a large portion of the improvement coming from North American sales of agricultural equipment. Case expects to have \$1.6bn in agricultural sales in the US this year.

Mr Tom Reynolds, an economist at Deere, is cautious in his forecasts. He thinks, low interest rates, increased income, and to some extent, increased confidence in the farm outlook have helped equipment sales. He says, however, "It is hard for me to say we'll see the start of a boom in farm equipment sales. I think we'll see a small improvement, not a boom."

Other measures of the farm economy - land values and farm debt - also indicate that US agriculture is in a period of slow but solid growth. Land values have been rising 2.5 to 3.5 per cent a year, in step with the overall growth of the US economy. US farm debt, which peaked at \$194bn in the depths of the farm recession in 1984, has subsided to \$132bn.

Farmers have been slow to take on new debt this year, an indication that they also are not expecting an agricultural boom. Although grain and soyabean stocks are historically low, and prices are high, producers are aware that, even if the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade negotiations are concluded successfully, world agricultural trade is not going to recover soon.

High soyabean prices have already inspired record plantings in Argentina and Brazil, and those crops will compete with US supplies on world markets. The former Soviet Union, the US's best grain customer two years ago, is still suffering credit problems, while China, its second-biggest customer, is reducing wheat imports. Overall, the US Department of Agriculture forecasts that feedgrain exports will drop to 1.35bn bushels in the 1994 fiscal year, down 15 per cent from 1993 and well below the peak of 2.2bn.

Russia to tax sugar imports

By Leyla Boulton in Moscow

Russia will slap a 60 per cent tariff on imported sugar from next month, Mr Alexander Zverev, the Russian deputy

prime minister responsible for agriculture, has announced. Interfax news agency quoted him as saying that the tax will protect the country's sugar producers.

Dutch farmers face phosphorous curbs

Dutch pig and poultry farmers will be forced by 1995 to cut the amount of phosphorous in their manure by 30 per cent below 1990 levels under a law passed by

parliament yesterday, the ANP news agency said, reports Reuters from the Hague.

If the farmers cannot reduce the amount of phosphorous nutrient in the manure applied

to land by 30 per cent they will be required to cut animal numbers. Further reductions will be required up to the year 2000 to achieve levels the land can absorb.

COMMODITIES PRICES

BASE METALS

LONDON METAL EXCHANGE

(Prices from Associated Metal Trading)

All aluminium, 99.7 purity (\$ per tonne)

Close 1147.5-48 1167.5-48

Previous 1116.5-17.5 1136.5-47

High/Low 1139.5-137 1173.5-136

AM Official 1159.5-40 1159.5-40

Kanto close 1173.5-136

Open int. 280,398

Total daily turnover 190,228

All aluminium alloy (\$ per tonne)

Close 925-35 1008-10

Previous 897-30 890-31

High/Low 890-31 1010/1003

AM Official 980.5-45 1005-10

Kanto close 1005-10

Open int. 2,675

Total daily turnover 743

All lead (\$ per tonne)

Close 473-74 497-88

Previous 456.5-77.5 491-82

High/Low 456.5-77.5 491-82

AM Official 489-85 490.5-15

Kanto close 490.5-15

Open int. 30,006

Total daily turnover 12,424

All nickel (\$ per tonne)

Close 5335-40 5305-40

Previous 5185-75 5225-30

High/Low 5205 5430/5440

AM Official 5205-06 5430-40

Kanto close 5430-40

Open int. 50,532

Total daily turnover 14,396

All tin (\$ per tonne)

Close 4895-005 4950-55

Previous 4890-05 4910-15

High/Low 4890-05 4920-05

AM Official 4890-56 4905-10

Kanto close 4905-10

Open int. 16,256

Total daily turnover 4,544

All zinc, special high grade (\$ per tonne)

Close 1015-16 1033-34

Previous 1000-01 1018-18.5

High/Low 1000-01 1049/1013

AM Official 1000-05 1018.5-19

Kanto close 1018.5-19

Open int. 88,137

Total daily turnover 37,212

All copper, grade A (\$ per tonne)

Close 1747-49 1770-72

Previous 1677-76 1699-95.5

High/Low 1741.5 1779/1763

AM Official 1741.5-42 1764-54.5

Kanto close 1764-54.5

Open int. 215,613

Total daily turnover 122,559

All LME aluminium 25000 (\$ per tonne)

Close 1474.5-48 1490.5-50

Previous 1474.5-48 1490.5-50

High/Low 1474.5-48 1490.5-50

AM Official 1474.5-48 1490.5-50

Kanto close 1490.5-50

Open int. 215,613

Total daily turnover 122,559

All LME aluminium 25000 (\$ per tonne)

Close 1474.5-48 1490.5-50

Previous 1474.5-48 1490.5-50

High/Low 1474.5-48 1490.5-50

AM Official 1474.5-48 1490.5-50

Kanto close 1490.5-50

Open int. 215,613

Total daily turnover 122,559

All LME aluminium 25000 (\$ per tonne)

Close 1474.5-48 1490.5-50

Previous 1474.5-48 1490.5-50

High/Low 1474.5-48 1490.5-50

AM Official 1474.5-48 1490.5-50

Kanto close 1490.5-50

Open int. 215,613

Total daily turnover 122,559

All LME aluminium 25000 (\$ per tonne)

Close 1474.5-48 1490.5-50

Precious Metals continued

GOLD COMEX (100 Troy oz; \$/troy oz)

Sett. Day's price change High Low Open int. Vol.

Dec 387.0 +3.8 388.5 386.1 89 54

Jan 387.5 +3.7 387.9 387.0 1 1

Feb 388.6 +3.7 389.4 387.7 67,698 20,028

Mar 389.5 +3.8 391.8 389.6 12,494 329

Apr 392.4 +3.8 393.9 391.7 21,114 98

May 394.3 +3.8 395.2 392.4 5,515 1

Total 104,746 26,771

All platinum NYMEX (50 Troy oz; \$/troy oz)

Dec 937.4 +6.1 938.0 936.0 1 1

Jan 938.1 +6.1 939.6 936.0 5,731 945

Feb 939.7 +6.2 940.5 938.0 7,690 414

Mar 941.5 +6.4 942.5 939.0 1,320 25

Apr 943.0 +6.4 944.0 941.0 1 1

May 943.6 +6.4 944.0 941.0 1 1

Total 25,930 54,400

All palladium NYMEX (100 Troy oz; \$/troy oz)

Dec 128.5 +0.90 128.50 127.50 2,648 94

Jan 128.5 +0.90 128.50 127.50 2,648 94

Feb 127.5 +0.90 128.00 126.00 69 4

Mar 126.5 +0.90 127.00 125.00 1 1

Apr 125.0 +0.90 125.00 124.00 1 1

Total 4,443 120

All silver COMEX (100 Troy oz; \$/troy oz)

Dec 512.7 +10.4 514.0 508.5 425 178

Jan 513.5 +10.4 515.0 510.0 29 1

Feb 514.3 +10.4 516.0 511.0 7,167 15,871

Mar 516.5 +10.5 518.0 513.0 1,320 25

Apr 519.7 +10.5 521.0 515.0 5,882 287

May 523.1 +10.5 525.0 519.0 10,223 253

Total 108,678 16,673

All crude oil NYMEX (42,000 US gal; \$/barrel)

Sett. Day's price change High Low Open int. Vol.

Dec 44.15 +1.16 45.70 43.85 78,420 30,747

Jan 44.15 +1.16 45.70 43.85 78,420 30,747

Feb 44.15 +1.16 45.70 43.85 78,420 30,747

Mar 44.15 +1.16 45.70 43.85 78,420 30,747

Apr 44.15 +1.16 45.70 43.85 78,420 30,747

May 44.15 +1.16 45.70 43.85 78,420 30,747

Total 108,678 16,673

All heating oil NYMEX (42,000 US gal; \$/barrel)

Sett. Day's price change High Low Open int. Vol.

Dec 44.15 +1.16 45.70 43.85 78,420 30,747

Jan 44.15 +1.16 45.70 43.85 78,420 30,747

Feb 44.15 +1.16 45.70 43.85 78,420 30,747

Mar 44.15 +1.16 45.70 43.85 78,420 30,747

Apr 44.15 +1.16 45.70 43.85 78,420 30,747

May 44.15 +1.16 45.70 43.85 78,420 30,747

Total 108,678 16,673

All gas oil NYMEX (42,000 US gal; \$/barrel)

Sett. Day's price change High Low Open int. Vol.

Dec 44.15 +1.16 45.70 43.85 78,420 30,747

Jan 44.15 +1.16 45.70 43.85 78,420 30,747

Feb 44.15 +1.16 45.70 43.85 78,420 30,747

Mar 44.15 +1.16 45.70 43.85 78,420 30,747

Apr 44.15 +1.16 45.70 43.85 78,420 30,747

May 44.15 +1.16 45.70 43.85 78,420 30,747

Total 108,678 16,673

All natural gas NYMEX (10,000 cu ft; \$/cu ft)

Sett. Day's price change High Low Open int. Vol.

Dec 1.915 0.041 1.930 1.898 12,868 10,355

Jan 1.898 0.023 1.899 1.885 15,946 3,273

Feb 1.889 0.016 1.891 1.885 13,149 2,173

Mar 1.885 0.003 1.900 1.870 11,706 1,451

Apr 1.890 0.008 1.910 1.880 7,810 641

May 1.900 0.008 1.915 1.890 5,946 654

Total 133,757 21,808

All unleaded gasoline NYMEX (42,000 US gal; \$/barrel)

FINANCIAL TIMES SURVEY

CHARITIES INVESTMENT AND FINANCE

Tuesday December 14 1993

Charities are now at the centre of a redefinition of the UK welfare state. As provision of welfare services fragments between the public, private and voluntary sectors, charities are under pressure to provide more – and to be financially efficient. Alan Pike reports

No help from the Budget

Do charities exist at all?

This pained, bewildered question was posed in the response to Mr Kenneth Clarke's Budget from the Charities Tax Reform Group, which represents many of the largest voluntary organisations.

The immediate cause for alarm was the absence of any specific new financial support for charities in the Budget, and in particular the government's failure to address the burning question of irrecoverable VAT which costs the sector nearly £300m a year.

But the comment also signifies a wider sense of frustration over whether any comprehensive strategy for charities exists at all. Government policies are pushing the voluntary sector into mainstream welfare service delivery, while many of its leaders feel that the financial and structural implications are not being fully addressed by either ministers or some charities themselves.

1993 is closing dramatically for the sector. Voluntary Action, a report by a group of former advisers to the Home Office voluntary services unit (the Centris report) proposed in October that charities should literally not exist at all, with recommendations for abolishing charitable status and tax relief. The report argued that charities funded through contracts with the public sector had surrendered

their independence, and advocated a clear split between charities delivering services and campaigning organisations.

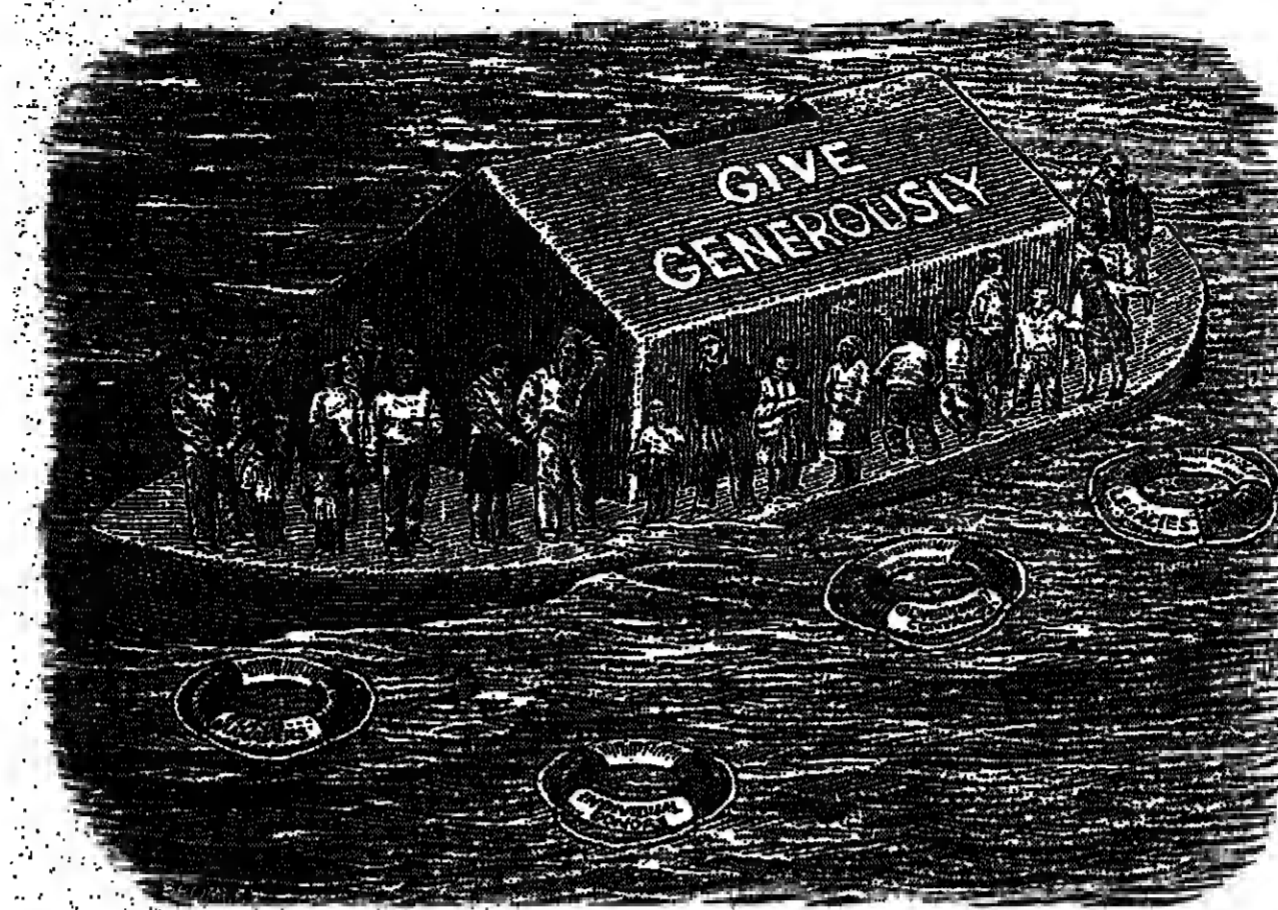
The government reacted with immediate assurances that tax relief was safe, but broader issues raised in the report will not disappear. As Mr Michael Howard, home secretary, commented last month, the report had "stimulated a discussion on the very nature of voluntary activity."

Some leading figures in the sector believe this debate, in the context of the changing shape of the welfare state, is so significant that there should be a royal commission on the voluntary sector.

As with any other sector of the economy, finance dominates the immediate issues facing charities. The recession has had the inevitable effect of curtailing income growth. But, according to the Charities Aid Foundation, all charities have not been equally affected: the very biggest organisations gained at the expense of the rest.

While the largest 200 fund-raising charities saw their voluntary income grow by 4 per cent in real terms last year, medium sized ones suffered a 9 per cent reduction.

The same pattern applied to income from government and local authority fees and grants, rents and investments. This



rose by 5 per cent for the biggest 200, while falling by 16 per cent for charities in the medium-league 200-400 size bracket.

Financial pressures, combined with stricter requirements on trustees under last year's Charities Act, are forcing charities of all sizes to give top priority to the performance of their investments.

Under the act the Official Custodian, a public official who handled the investments of many smaller charities, is returning them to the charities in a staged exercise to 1996. Many of these organisations are being attracted to common investment funds (CIFs), a unit trust arrangement for charities operated by fund managers.

The first decision for charity trustees lacking previous experience of dealing with fund managers is between choosing

a charities specialist or one of the large investment groups. Not surprisingly, both work hard to persuade charity trustees that there is only one choice they could sensibly make.

Viscount Churchill, a director of Church, Charity, and Local Authority Fund Managers – one of the specialists – says: "We have long experience of investing for charities and churches and find that our dedicated interest is appreciated by clients. Our staff are particularly well equipped to deal with questions arising from particular legal restrictions facing charities and ethical and other concerns."

Big organisations also have teams of charity specialists on their staff. While stressing the benefits of a large group, they are anxious to demonstrate

that their interest is not confined to large charities.

"We recognise the need to cater for smaller charities without full-time finance managers, and offer a personal investment management service with access to a fund manager, to charities with as little as £20,000 to invest," says Martyn Bensley, head of Fleming Investment Management's charity division. As a spin off, Mr Bensley offers small charity clients free places on management training courses run for Fleming's own staff.

Parts of the Charities Act are being phased in, and it had been expected that regulations covering professional fundraising, reports and accounts and collections would be introduced between March and December next year. At least some of these – and the publi-

cation of a final version of the Charity Commissioners' SORP 2 recommended accounting practices for charities – will be delayed. The government has decided to await the outcome of a deregulation task force examining charities.

While a tighter legal structure may help increase standards of efficiency and integrity, it will not provide a short-cut to solving immediate financial pressures.

Charities are particularly concerned that they cannot recover VAT even in circumstances where local authorities that provide identical services do not pay it, and had lobbied the Chancellor for a rebate system similar to a Canadian one.

Not only did the government fail to respond, but this year's two budgets will increase financial burdens on charities.

The National Council for Voluntary Organisations estimates that VAT on power and cuts in tax credits on dividends will cost the sector around £100m a year. Increased petrol duty will bring a bill for £29m, while transferring sick pay to employers will cost around £20m.

This year's community care reforms have seen charities drawn further into the provision of services that were once a public sector monopoly. The British Red Cross, for example, provides aftercare at home for people released from hospital, medical equipment loan services, patient escorts and transport under contract to local authorities.

The British Red Cross community programme depends greatly on volunteers, and is a good example of the way in which charities are seeking to mobilise the support of voluntary workers in far more sophisticated ways than simply rattling tins on flag days. Volunteers working on the British Red Cross's Home from Hospital scheme, which supports dependent patients after discharge, undergo training including body mechanics and mobility, emergency life support and hygiene practice. Some are being trained for specialised tasks like administering eye drops and catheters.

Volunteering is something the government is keen to encourage, and Mr John Major, the prime minister, recently announced plans to establish a national network of volunteers. From next year, local organisations will be able to submit bids under a new government-sponsored grant scheme for projects that increase the scale and impact of voluntary effort. Mr Major also intends to double the number of awards for voluntary service in future honours lists to 300.

Involvement of charities in the delivery of services is a reality and will grow. But two concerns remain.

One is financial – a report last month produced by three charitable groups after consultations with Whitehall departments warned the government not to place additional burdens

IN THIS SURVEY

- Investments: Charities still have to invest most of their funds in gilts – and may have lost millions in potential investment returns because of gilts' relative under-performance Page II
- One-off appeals: a new DIY manual Page III
- Centris project: the report suggests that charities join the 'social market' sector of the economy... Page III
- Fund Management: charities are making more use of managed funds..... Page IV
- Charity card promoters meet the Ghost of Christmas future Page IV

on the voluntary sector without making adequate resources available.

The second issue is ethical, and raises the questions about the "very nature of voluntary activity" referred to by Mr Howard. Do charities that rely on government finance lose their independence? How businesslike can a charity become? While there is obvious need for managerial and financial efficiency, there are signs of public aversion to over-commercial fundraising techniques and charity shops that imitate High Street retailers. And will volunteers continue giving their free time to huge, businesslike charities engaged in open competition to win public sector contracts?

There has been a 20th century tradition of public bodies providing mainstream welfare services, and charities acting as the advocates of the service recipients. The government's purchaser-provider split in health and community care has begun to reverse that process. Local authorities and health authorities are becoming the champions of the consumer, and unelected charities and arms-length trust hospitals and community units the providers of services.

Some voluntary sector leaders think the implications of that issue alone are profound enough to merit the attentions of a royal commission.

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CHARITIES INVESTMENT AND FINANCE II

Bethan Hutton looks at investment restrictions

Gilts swallow funds

The Charities Act 1993 was much bemoaned at the time. It seemed to promise a new era of investment freedom for charities restricted by the 1961 Trustee Investments Act.

More than a year later, however, there is still no sign that the out-dated requirement for charities to invest most of their funds in gilts will be lifted in the near future.

The Trustee Investments Act (TIA), which in its day was a liberalising measure, requires charities' investments to be split between "wide" range vehicles, such as UK equities (but only those passing certain conditions) and UK authorised unit trusts, and "narrow" range, which is basically UK gilts. No more than half can be in the wide range.

It has been estimated that hundreds of millions of pounds of potential investment returns have been lost since 1961 because of the underperformance of gilts relative to equities. Nigel Siederer, director of the Association of Charitable Foundations (ACF), which has been lobbying for a broadening of the investment rules, says that if a charity had put half its money in gilts and half in UK shares in 1961, it would now find that it had about 85 per cent of its funds in shares, because of the comparative growth rates.

The 1992 Act gave the Home Secretary the power to relax these restrictions as he saw fit. This was expected to mean a swift move to

their constitutions, to allow investment managers a freer rein.

The TIA is not the only source of investment constraints. Many charities have a need for regular income from their investments, which can be very difficult to meet in the current investment climate, with its low interest rates. This has coincided with the fall end of the recession, with its impact on grant income and donations, to make more charities worried about the income they are earning from their funds.

"The fixed proportion of income they require is set sufficiently high to make the normal type of fund, with a high proportion in equities, inappropriate, so they need more in fixed interest assets," says John Harrison, of Fleming Investment Management.

This is still going to be the case for many charities even if the TIA restrictions are relaxed. "More liberalisation these days must be sensible," says Andrew Hind of Barnados, who is also chairman of the Charity Finance Directors Group. But he adds: "It is dangerous to think of charities as a homogenous group. There are still going to be a large number of endowed charities for whom income is the key thing. If you cannot touch the capital, there is no point in having wonderful capital growth in equities, if that is not available to you to meet your commitments."

In the period leading up to last year's crisis in the exchange rate mechanism, unconstrained charities also started to look abroad for income.

"The proportion of investment in overseas bonds has grown quite markedly over the last 18 months or so," says Mr Harrison. "Overseas bonds were almost unheard of in charities' portfolios two years ago, but are a fairly high proportion of the total now - about 6 per cent." However, now that sterling is no longer so overvalued, he expects that proportion to decline. "Sterling is where the expenses arise."

Mr Harrison sees an historic tendency for charities to shadow pension funds in their investment patterns, and for that reason he suspects that the holding of overseas equities may grow: the average pension fund is 25 per cent invested in overseas equities, whereas unconstrained charities have on average only 24 per cent in overseas equities.

Mr Hind sees it in a different light. He thinks the way that the charities act has highlighted trustees' responsibilities could make them more conservative in their investment attitudes, pushing them away from overseas equities and other investments which could be seen as in the least risky.

"Trustees are likely to want to play it safe even more than they did before. Perhaps the impact will be felt in terms of the selection of fund managers," Mr Hind suggests. Trustees could feel uneasy about justifying the use of anyone but the leading fund managers. "I think we may see a concentration of portfolios into the big five or 10, in a way that we have not seen before."

One result of the 1992 Act which is already becoming visible is the winding down of the office of the Official Custodian, whose role was to administer the investments of thousands of charities, dealing with day to day dividend payments and so on.

TOP TWENTY FUND RAISING CHARITIES

					Total voluntary income £000	Covenants £000	Legacies £000	Charity shop income £000	Fund raising income £000	Central & local gov grants £000	Central & local gov grants £000	Net assets £000
92	91	90	89	Name								
1	8	7	5	Save the Children Fund	70,899	-	6,857	2,122	18,998	-	28,020	27,994
2	1	1	2	National Trust	65,207	27,705	22,259	-	-	917	8,573	354,917
3	3	2	3	Royal Nat Lifeboat Inst	55,791	1,699	39,695	-	9,769	-	-	148,807
4	2	3	1	Oxfam	53,254	12,183	5,268	18,895	275	-	7,029	27,258
5	4	4	4	Imperial Cancer Research	47,495	720	33,927	6,631	3,488	-	-	81,998
6	5	5	4	Imperial Cancer Research	40,945	351	29,170	1,424	2,800	-	-	38,998
7	6	6	6	Cancer Research Campaign	34,510	2,198	18,443	740	-	29,881	837	128,144
8	10	8	8	Barnados	32,981	-	23,741	-	-	-	-	78,347
9	7	9	7	Salvation Army	31,407	-	15,854	-	-	1,052	316	194,300
10	9	8	12	Help the Aged	29,039	987	5,836	697	-	-	486	23,396
11	8	14	18	British Red Cross Society	27,692	869	7,536	1,743	1,827	226	10,711	57,728
12	12	18	10	NSPCC	27,598	-	7,054	-	-	-	2,532	29,211
13	17	18	18	Christian Aid	26,406	3,296	2,875	-	-	-	10,050	8,745
14	15	12	14	British Heart Foundation	25,728	473	15,034	730	5,780	-	-	49,126
15	13	10	13	Guide Dogs for the Blind	25,228	344	17,439	-	4,331	-	-	150,707
16	18	15	18	Royal National Institute for the Blind	24,942	194	17,059	-	-	14,388	200	64,097
17	18	22	24	Cancer Relief Macmillan Fund	24,853	1,819	7,794	69	2,720	-	2,657	16,736
18	19	20	21	ActionAid	23,084	12,806	61	-	1,493	-	3,786	10,897
19	24	23	27	RSPB	21,883	1,240	7,234	-	1,221	-	605	36,308
20	23	17	11	Spastics Society	21,502	876	4,788	4,584	1,124	28,536	2,392	26,317

* Figures confirmed by charity

Source

Competition among the banks for charity accounts is hotting up, reports Alison Smith

Good cause to cut some charges

The good commercial news for charities is that competition among the main banks for their accounts is hotting up. The less good news is that this has not - not yet - translated into free banking for all.

But the competition is far from over. Last month, Globalbank launched an aggressive campaign with the somewhat over-stated claim that the high street banks had effectively ended free banking for fund raisers, while the TSB started an account aimed at charities.

Another bank has just carried out a direct mail exercise intended to entice at least some of the largest of the 15,000 charities away from their current banks.

In August, the Co-operative bank produced two new accounts for charities. Lloyds has recently begun offering a "treasurers account" aimed specifically at people running charities or clubs.

Furthermore, after leaving its tariffs unchanged for some years, Midland is now planning to offer what it says will be a more competitive and "pro-active" deal in January.

Though the banks make little or no money from charities and clubs - indeed, they emphasise that their aim is not to make a profit out of good causes - the sector is so large



Fundraising events produced 14 per cent less income last year than in 1991, but charity shop revenue increased by 18 per cent. Picture: David Reed

that the main banks cannot afford not to be in it at all. Banks want their market share.

To some banks, such as the TSB or the Co-operative, the sector is particularly important, either because of their background as a mutual institution or because of the particular style of banking they are selling. Midland is offering the new deal as part of its strategy of becoming a more "community-based" bank.

Unless the charity concerned is a large organisation, banks are unlikely to offer much in the way of sophisticated financial services. While some banks offer advice to people setting up or taking over small charities, most seem to feel that what most charities want is a "no nonsense" cheque account, with perhaps a deposit account or some interest on the credit balance.

The largest charities are treated very much as businesses, and the banks say that they accept that they should pay for the services they receive.

Those services, and the charges they pay, are negotiable. Negotiation with a branch manager is also available to small charities or organisations

social the organisation, the less flexible the bank is likely to prove if the terms for free banking in the account are not met.

Banks generally make a sharp distinction between their charitable donations and their charitable banking: so should charities. The fact that your charity or cause has received some money from a local branch should not incline you to bank there unless it really offers you the best deal.

On the other hand, if you have a bank manager involved in running your organisation, you have a good chance of getting a good deal from him or her bank. (If you have more than one, you may be able to run a competitive tender for who gets your business.)

The right sort of account to get free banking will depend most heavily on the level of credits and amount of activity going through an account.

Lloyds estimates that about 85 per cent of all charities and clubs carry out fewer than 10 transactions a month. This is fortunate for charities if they bank with Lloyds. The treasurer's account offers free banking and some interest if the number of withdrawals is lower than 10 a month, but after that the cost per withdrawal is £2.00.

Other high street banks have similar limits on withdrawals: Midland currently offers free banking if in credit and fewer than 25 debit items a quarter; with a charge of 74p per item beyond that.

Barclays has no published guidelines as such. It leaves to the discretion of managers whether or not they should charge (after the one year's free banking offered to all charities and clubs).

For a good cause, the broad

guidance to managers would be to provide free banking where there are up to about 15 transactions a quarter, although if a steady balance was maintained, then more transactions could occur before charging.

At both Barclays and at the National Westminster bank, the prevailing emphasis is on the local manager's discretion, so the approach could vary even between different branches in the same town - another argument for shopping around.

Nat West says that it tries to do no more than cover its costs, and estimates that, at current interest rates, £1000 in an account over the year would support about 100 entries through the account.

All the banks emphasise the discretion of the local bank manager and the need for flexibility in this area. Unless a charity has been extremely badly run, a bank is unlikely to want to risk bad local publicity by charging for a slight overstepping of the numbers of transactions, or a slight drop

it is worth ensuring that the inertia that affects many people's attitude to personal banking does not apply to a charity

in a credit balance below the minimum level for a particular type of account.

All this means that, quite apart from general reasons for change (such as a new treasurer taking over), it is worth ensuring that the inertia that affects many people's attitude towards their personal bank accounts does not apply to a bank account in the name of a charity.

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CHARITIES INVESTMENT AND FINANCE III

Alan Pike analyses the Centris research project

'Social market' will join the economy

Voluntary Action, a report published in October by the Home Office for the Centris research project, will be best remembered for two things.

First, its remarkable recommendation that charitable status and accompanying tax relief should be abolished. Second, the speed and force with which the government, at the level of speeches by the Prime Minister and the Home Secretary, distanced itself from the report and assured charities that tax relief was safe.

So critical was the response to the report's plans for ending charitable status and tax relief that it diverted attention from the remainder of its contents, which recognised that the voluntary sector is undergoing fundamental change as a growing number of charities deliver welfare services financed by public contracts.

The time had come, suggested the report, for such charities, National Health Service trust hospitals, and opted-out schools, housing associations and private sector companies involved in social activities, to be linked in a redefined third sector of the economy, or social market.

"The new economy would be regulated, controlled and promoted in various ways, and a key feature of it would be that there would be sufficient coherence to call it a third sector. Much service delivery, both at local and at national level, presently in the public, private and voluntary sectors, could go into it."

The Centris report reflects a growing interest in the social market or social economy, a concept which traditionally has had less clarity in the UK than some other European Union countries, such as France. Publication of the report coincided with a forum on the social economy organised by Unity Trust Bank, which brought together representatives of a wide range of organisations that could fit within a definition of the social economy.

As speakers at the forum

Top 10 grant-making trusts 1991/92*		
Position	Name	Grants (£000)
1	Wellcome Trust	92,300
2	Tudor Trust	20,234
3	Royal Society	17,383
4	British Academy	16,350
5	Wellton Foundation	14,913
6	Gatsby Charitable Foundation	13,701
7	Henry Smith (Estates Charities)	11,687
8	Leverhulme Trust	10,549
9	City Parochial Foundation	8,887
10	Saring Foundation	7,936

*Excludes UK branch of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, a Portuguese charitable foundation. Source: Charities Aid Foundation

Companies giving £5m or more to charity 1992/3	
Charity	Total corporate support (£000)*
Abbey National	6,020
Barclays	7,520
British Petroleum	11,000
BT	14,646
ICI	5,500
Marika and Spencer	5,600
National Westminster Bank	10,202
Shell UK	5,523
Unilever	5,000

*Includes cash donations, value of sponsorship, secondment and other forms of support. Source: Charities Aid Foundation

acknowledged, the first hurdle - definition - is not a easy one to jump. If all potential candidates were included, the social economy could encompass building societies, provident private health insurers and co-operatives, as well as charities, housing associations, trust hospitals and similar organisations.

Mr Paul Ramadier, an EU official, told the Unity Trust seminar that on such a broad definition, social economy organisations were of enormous economic and social importance. There are 100m members of insurance, and healthcare mutuals in Europe, and social economy enterprises account for 20 per cent of European savings. The co-operative sector has 60m members and has provided 3m jobs.

Mr Ramadier identified two social issues, unemployment, and the increasing proportion of elderly people in the population, as examples of areas where the contribution of organisations from the social economy would increase. "The

resources of the whole community will need mobilising, and in my view that can only be done through social economy organisations."

The seminar described social economy organisations as those "engaging in economic activity to fulfil primarily social, mutual or community objectives." While resisting a tighter definition, delegates agreed that it would be helpful if policymakers took the sector's contribution more seriously. There are plans for an annual social economy forum with a standing committee, and an exchange of ideas and information.

A concern expressed at the Unity Trust seminar was that there was a "damaging association of not-for-profit organisations with inefficiency" - a particular concern in the voluntary sector. Many third sector organisations believe their managerial skills stand up well to public or private sector comparison, and are looking for ways of spreading this message.

Fundraising and funding

How to run a one-off appeal

Since she spearheaded the Wishing Well Appeal for redeveloping London's Great Ormond Street children's hospital, Marion Allford has found herself a popular target for voluntary sector staff seeking tips on fundraising.

This is hardly surprising. The Wishing Well was one of the most remarkable and successful single-issue appeals ever mounted in the UK. Launched in October, 1987, the fundraising campaign, made famous by its logo of a child's face smiling through a tear, had reached its original £30m target by January 1989 - with no sign of the flow of money it had unleashed, abating. It closed in June, 1989 - a year ahead of the original schedule - having raised

and reach their financial targets relatively quickly. Established charities face different fundraising requirements, and many have developed increasingly sophisticated methods to try to combat the effects of the recession.

Techniques such as direct mail, now often conducted on charities' behalf by agencies, became common in the 1970s and 1980s. They have recently been complemented by attempts to target potential donors more precisely and develop long-term relationships with them. There is also a trend towards affinity marketing campaigns, linking charities' names with credit cards or commercial products.

Professional, business-style fundraising techniques are usually only available to big charities with substantial fundraising budgets and, at a time when there has been little overall growth in total giving, this may help explain why the largest charities are performing against the trend. Charities Aid Foundation figures published last month show that Britain's 200 biggest charities increased their total income by 4 per cent in real terms in 1991-92. In contrast, those in the 200-400 size bracket suffered a 9 per cent decline.

The CAF research reveals some striking recent changes in sources of charities' voluntary income. Fundraising events produced 14 per cent less income last year than in 1991. Revenue from charity shops, by contrast, increased by 16 per cent.

Corporate support - both financial and in terms of staff secondments, expertise and other assistance - forms a central part of many charities' plans. This, like many other areas of fundraising, has been affected by the recession. The CAF survey shows that only nine companies gave more than £5m to charity in 1992-93, compared with 13 the previous year.

Many charities, particularly smaller ones, often face serious problems meeting core funding - donors are generally more willing to finance particular charitable projects and campaigns than to meet the basic running costs.

Core funding difficulties can sometimes drive charities to closure. Trustees of the National Council for Child Health, the only charity promoting immunisation and preventative health care in children, decided at an extraordinary meeting last month to wind up the organisation. The charity had failed to persuade grant-making trusts or private sector donors to contribute to its core funding after a three-year govern-

Many charities have developed sophisticated methods to combat the effects of recession

£54m. This rose to £84m when interest and contributions from public funds were added.

Ms Allford, a fundraising consultant who specialises in charity appeals, has now shared her experience in *Charity Appeals - the Complete Guide to Success*, a manual published in association with the Institute of Charity Fundraising Managers and with the support of Business in the Community.

The book - net royalties will go to Great Ormond Street - is far more than a description of the Wishing Well experience. It is a thorough, comprehensive guide to running one-off capital appeals, giving detailed advice across such wide-ranging aspects of fundraising as donor research, insurance, media events, lotteries, budgeting and commercial partnerships.

Ms Allford acknowledges that the Wishing Well's emotional cause, sick children, was one that few other charities could rival in terms of its potential for gaining public support. Since the Great Ormond Street success, two other hospitals - the Royal Marsden cancer hospital, London, and the Royal Hospital for Sick Children, Edinburgh - have, with advice from the Wishing Well team, adopted similar appeal strategies with positive results. They raised £25m and £11m respectively.

One-off appeals for single projects - whether on the scale of big hospital appeals or to repair the organ of a village church - are a particular speciality of the charity fundraising. They need to make immediate impact



ment grant had come to an end.

Mediation UK, which promotes mediation rather than resort to the courts as a means of resolving disputes, has warned that it will have to dismiss Ms Marian Liebmann, its director, in February unless new funds are found. Ms Liebmann says charitable trusts that financed Mediation UK's launch are not prepared to continue providing core

The problem is finding funds to continue supporting projects once they have been launched

funding, and that the charity's executive committee is spending so much time fundraising that it cannot provide an adequate service.

The problem of finding funds to continue supporting projects once they have been launched was highlighted last month by the Church Urban Fund, the only national grant-making charity working exclusively in the inner cities and peripheral estates.

In a report to the general synod of the Church of England, the fund - which normally makes initial grants for between three and five years - said it had expected that worthwhile social projects "would be picked up by state or local government funding, and that some activities would be taken on to a parish's or diocese's ordinary funds."

Such developments had occurred much less than expected, and the Church Urban Fund will now have to introduce mechanisms to evaluate claims for established projects' continued funding against the needs of emerging schemes.

"We have to try to ensure both that worthwhile current work is not cut prematurely short, and also that creative new activity is not stifled," says the report. The issue is one of the central dilemmas facing all organisations funding the voluntary sector.

Charity Appeals - the Complete Guide to Success by Marion Allford, J M Dent, £15.99

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*Source: Murexpress. Offer to Bid % change, gross income re-invested. Charity Equity Fund +51.8%, FT-A All-Share +40.2%, 01.04.92 to 22.11.93. ** Source: FT.
Past performance is not necessarily a guide to future performance. The value of investments is not guaranteed and the income from them can go down as well as up.
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Equity Shares Traded

5 Electronics

as Hoare Govett downgraded from a buy and recommended taking profits.

NatWest Securities was largely responsible for driving the recently depressed oil sector sharply better. The broker sold oil share prices already discount unsustainably low oil prices, especially BP, which it said "now discounts an unrealistically pessimistic long term oil price of around \$14". BP shares moved up 9 to 324p.

Dull results from Greene King saw the shares retreat 15 to 553p and prompted a series of downgrades from drinks analysts. Most pulled their full-year forecasts back to the £21m level, a decrease of around 8

although there were hints of possible end-of-year window. Its market share was likely to put a remerged bid for Maryland

Housebuilder Berkeley Group raised up 20 to a year's high of 480p as the market registered its approval of a sparkling set of interim figures.

SmithKline Beecham clawed back from earlier weakness on news that the Department of Health had granted it a licence to market **Famvir**, a new anti-

virus drug, to a price of 1,000p, in which it still retains a 29 per cent holding – off the agenda. **Morland** shares reflected this, slipping back 5 to 538p.

There was strong buying of **Eurotunnel** shares ahead of its conference to approve its £4.3-billion bid for the Channel Tunnel. The Channel tunnel operator has been enjoying a boost to senti-

unchanged at 375p. 33 to 509p in heavy London

Meanwhile, Wellcome rebounded from a big loss on Friday. The stock gained 12 at 639p, with some investors squaring positions ahead of the company's annual meeting on Thursday. BZW was said to have recommended the stock.

Chemicals company Croda International receded 5 in 339p

turnover of nearly 50,000. The stock was the best performer on the Paris bourse.

MARKET REPORTERS:
Christopher Price,
Peter John,
Steve Thompson.

■ Other statistics. Page 22

RISES AND FALLS YESTERDAY

	Rises	Falls	Same
British Funds	41	8	29
Other Fund Interest	3	0	12
Other Fund Income	347	271	918
Commercial, Industrial	46	57	88
Financial	2	9	101
Property	185	26	324
Investment Trusts	27	19	36
Oil & Gas	44	10	96
Miners	53	35	56
Others	770	415	1,564
Totals			

LONDON RECENT ISSUES: EQUITIES											
Issue price	Am't paid up	Mkt. cap (m.)	1993			Close price p		Net div.	Div. cov.	Grs. yld	P/E rat
			High	Low	Stock		+/				
100	F.P.	27.9	102	82	Abstract Lloyds	93	-	-	-	-	-
-	F.P.	2.4	40	36	Da. Warrants	90	-	-	-	-	-

115	F.P.	94.1	121	106	Bedgerline	109	+2	R4.1	2.1	4.7	12.9
120	F.P.	48.5	153	128	Distance Int	151		-	-	-	-

[illegible]

FINANCIAL TIMES EQUITY INDICES								
	Dec 13	Dec 10	Dec 9	Dec 8	Dec 7	Yr ago	High	Low
Ordinary share	2453.3	2459.6	2482.9	2454.4	2429.8	2087.2	2462.9	2124.7
Ord. shs. incld	3.70	3.77	5.77	3.70	3.81	4.48	4.52	3.77

P/E ratio nil	27.08	27.18	27.21	27.14	26.80	19.10	27.21	18.14
Gold Mines	257.6	246.7	251.7	235.9	231.1	85.5	257.9	60.0

For 1993, Ordinary share index since completion: high 2402.8 1/12/93; low 48.4 26/6/40
Gold Mines Index since completion high: 734 7 15/2/80 - low 43.5 28/10/71
Ordinary share base date 1/7/35; Gold Mines 12/8/55.

Ordinary Share hourly changes

Open	8.00	11.00	12.00	13.00	14.00	15.00	16.00	High	Low	
2402.8	2404.9	2405.7	2415.9	2461.7	2469.4	2454.8	2452.6	2451.8	2464.5	2451.3

SEAO bargains	31.771	40,333	40,655	34,389	31,541	24,244
Equity turnover (\$mit)	-	1802.5	1959.2	1722.8	1439.2	846.8

Equity bargained†	-	45,845	45,706	36,420	35,842	28,202
Shares traded (mil)†	-	772.0	825.4	781.2	599.8	387.0

LONDON SHARE SERVICE

AMERICANS

Stock	Price	%	1993	1992	1991	1990	1989	1988	1987	1986	1985	1984	1983	1982	1981	1980	1979	1978	1977	1976	1975	1974	1973	1972	1971	1970	1969	1968	1967	1966	1965	1964	1963	1962	1961	1960	1959	1958	1957	1956	1955	1954	1953	1952	1951	1950	1949	1948	1947	1946	1945	1944	1943	1942	1941	1940	1939	1938	1937	1936	1935	1934	1933	1932	1931	1930	1929	1928	1927	1926	1925	1924	1923	1922	1921	1920	1919	1918	1917	1916	1915	1914	1913	1912	1911	1910	1909	1908	1907	1906	1905	1904	1903	1902	1901	1900	1899	1898	1897	1896	1895	1894	1893	1892	1891	1890	1889	1888	1887	1886	1885	1884	1883	1882	1881	1880	1879	1878	1877	1876	1875	1874	1873	1872	1871	1870	1869	1868	1867	1866	1865	1864	1863	1862	1861	1860	1859	1858	1857	1856	1855	1854	1853	1852	1851	1850	1849	1848	1847	1846	1845	1844	1843	1842	1841	1840	1839	1838	1837	1836	1835	1834	1833	1832	1831	1830	1829	1828	1827	1826	1825	1824	1823	1822	1821	1820	1819	1818	1817	1816	1815	1814	1813	1812	1811	1810	1809	1808	1807	1806	1805	1804	1803	1802	1801	1800	1799	1798	1797	1796	1795	1794	1793	1792	1791	1790	1789	1788	1787	1786	1785	1784	1783	1782	1781	1780	1779	1778	1777	1776	1775	1774	1773	1772	1771	1770	1769	1768	1767	1766	1765	1764	1763	1762	1761	1760	1759	1758	1757	1756	1755	1754	1753	1752	1751	1750	1749	1748	1747	1746	1745	1744	1743	1742	1741	1740	1739	1738	1737	1736	1735	1734	1733	1732	1731	1730	1729	1728	1727	1726	1725	1724	1723	1722	1721	1720	1719	1718	1717	1716	1715	1714	1713	1712	1711	1710	1709	1708	1707	1706	1705	1704	1703	1702	1701	1700	1699	1698	1697	1696	1695	1694	1693	1692	1691	1690	1689	1688	1687	1686	1685	1684	1683	1682	1681	1680	1679	1678	1677	1676	1675	1674	1673	1672	1671	1670	1669	1668	1667	1666	1665	1664	1663	1662	1661	1660	1659	1658	1657	1656	1655	1654	1653	1652	1651	1650	1649	1648	1647	1646	1645	1644	1643	1642	1641	1640	1639	1638	1637	1636	1635	1634	1633	1632	1631	1630	1629	1628	1627	1626	1625	1624	1623	1622	1621	1620	1619	1618	1617	1616	1615	1614	1613	1612	1611	1610	1609	1608	1607	1606	1605	1604	1603	1602	1601	1600	1599	1598	1597	1596	1595	1594	1593	1592	1591	1590	1589	1588	1587	1586	1585	1584	1583	1582	1581	1580	1579	1578	1577	1576	1575	1574	1573	1572	1571	1570	1569	1568	1567	1566	1565	1564	1563	1562	1561	1560	1559	1558	1557	1556	1555	1554	1553	1552	1551	1550	1549	1548	1547	1546	1545	1544	1543	1542	1541	1540	1539	1538	1537	1536	1535	1534	1533	1532	1531	1530	1529	1528	1527	1526	1525	1524	1523	1522	1521	1520	1519	1518	1517	1516	1515	1514	1513	1512	1511	1510	1509	1508	1507	1506	1505	1504	1503	1502	1501	1500	1499	1498	1497	1496	1495	1494	1493	1492	1491	1490	1489	1488	1487	1486	1485	1484	1483	1482	1481	1480	1479	1478	1477	1476	1475	1474	1473	1472	1471	1470	1469	1468	1467	1466	1465	1464	1463	1462	1461	1460	1459	1458	1457	1456	1455	1454	1453	1452	1451	1450	1449	1448	1447	1446	1445	1444	1443	1442	1441	1440	1439	1438	1437	1436	1435	1434	1433	1432	1431	1430	1429	1428	1427	1426	1425	1424	1423	1422	1421	1420	1419	1418	1417	1416	1415	1414	1413	1412	1411	1410	1409	1408	1407	1406	1405	1404	1403	1402	1401	1400	1399	1398	1397	1396	1395	1394	1393	1392	1391	1390	1389	1388	1387	1386	1385	1384	1383	1382	1381	1380	1379	1378	1377	1376	1375	1374	1373	1372	1371	1370	1369	1368	1367	1366	1365	1364	1363	1362	1361	1360	1359	1358	1357	1356	1355	1354	1353	1352	1351	1350	1349	1348	1347	1346	1345	1344	1343	1342	1341	1340	1339	1338	1337	1336	1335	1334	1333	1332	1331	1330	1329	1328	1327	1326	1325	1324	1323	1322	1321	1320	1319	1318	1317	1316	1315	1314	1313	1312	1311	1310	1309	1308	1307	1306	1305	1304	1303	1302	1301	1300	1299	1298	1297	1296	1295	1294	1293	1292	1291	1290	1289	1288	1287	1286	1285	1284	1283	1282	1281	1280	1279	1278	1277	1276	1275	1274	1273	1272	1271	1270	1269	1268	1267	1266	1265	1264	1263	1262	1261	1260	1259	1258	1257	1256	1255	1254	1253	1252	1251	1250	1249	1248	1247	1246	1245	1244	1243	1242	1241	1240	1239	1238	1237	1236	1235	1234	1233	1232	1231	1230	1229	1228	1227	1226	1225	1224	1223	1222	1221	1220	1219	1218	1217	1216	1215	1214	1213	1212	1211	1210	1209	1208	1207	1206	1205	1204	1203	1202	1201	1200	1199	1198	1197	1196	1195	1194	1193	1192	1191	1190	1189	1188	1187	1186	1185	1184	1183	1182	1181	1180	1179	1178	1177	1176	1175	1174	1173	1172	1171	1170	1169	1168	1167	1166	1165	1164	1163	1162	1161	1160	1159	1158	1157	1156	1155	1154	1153	1152	1151	1150	1149	1148	1147	1146	1145	1144	1143	1142	1141	1140	1139	1138	1137	1136	1135	1134	1133	1132	1131	1130	1129	1128	1127	1126	1125	1124	1123	1122	1121	1120	1119	1118	1117	1116	1115	1114	1113	1112	1111	1110	1109	1108	1107	1106	1105	1104	1103	1102	1101	1100	1099	1098	1097	1096	1095	1094	1093	1092	1091	1090	1089	1088	1087	1086	1085	1084	1083	1082	1081	1080	1079	1078	1077	1076	1075	1074	1073	1072	1071	1070	1069	1068	1067	1066	1065	1064	1063	1062	1061	1060	1059	1058	1057	1056	1055	1054	1053	1052	1051	1050	1049	1048	1047	1046	1045	1044	1043	1042	1041	1040	1039	1038	1037	1036	1035	1034	1033	1032	1031	1030	1029	1028	1027	1026	1025	1024	1023	1022	1021	1020	1019	1018	1017	1016	1015	1014	1013	1012	1011	1010	1009	1008	1007	1006	1005	1004	1003	1002	1001	1000	999	998	997	996	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INVESTMENT TRUSTS - Cont.

Trust Name	Price	Change	1993	1992	1991	1990	1989	1988	1987	1986	1985	1984	1983	1982	1981	1980	1979	1978	1977	1976	1975	1974	1973	1972	1971	1970	1969	1968	1967	1966	1965	1964	1963	1962	1961	1960	1959	1958	1957	1956	1955	1954	1953	1952	1951	1950	1949	1948	1947	1946	1945	1944	1943	1942	1941	1940	1939	1938	1937	1936	1935	1934	1933	1932	1931	1930	1929	1928	1927	1926	1925	1924	1923	1922	1921	1920	1919	1918	1917	1916	1915	1914	1913	1912	1911	1910	1909	1908	1907	1906	1905	1904	1903	1902	1901	1900	1899	1898	1897	1896	1895	1894	1893	1892	1891	1890	1889	1888	1887	1886	1885	1884	1883	1882	1881	1880	1879	1878	1877	1876	1875	1874	1873	1872	1871	1870	1869	1868	1867	1866	1865	1864	1863	1862	1861	1860	1859	1858	1857	1856	1855	1854	1853	1852	1851	1850	1849	1848	1847	1846	1845	1844	1843	1842	1841	1840	1839	1838	1837	1836	1835	1834	1833	1832	1831	1830	1829	1828	1827	1826	1825	1824	1823	1822	1821	1820	1819	1818	1817	1816	1815	1814	1813	1812	1811	1810	1809	1808	1807	1806	1805	1804	1803	1802	1801	1800	1799	1798	1797	1796	1795	1794	1793	1792	1791	1790	1789	1788	1787	1786	1785	1784	1783	1782	1781	1780	1779	1778	1777	1776	1775	1774	1773	1772	1771	1770	1769	1768	1767	1766	1765	1764	1763	1762	1761	1760	1759	1758	1757	1756	1755	1754	1753	1752	1751	1750	1749	1748	1747	1746	1745	1744	1743	1742	1741	1740	1739	1738	1737	1736	1735	1734	1733	1732	1731	1730	1729	1728	1727	1726	1725	1724	1723	1722	1721	1720	1719	1718	1717	1716	1715	1714	1713	1712	1711	1710	1709	1708	1707	1706	1705	1704	1703	1702	1701	1700	1699	1698	1697	1696	1695	1694	1693	1692	1691	1690	1689	1688	1687	1686	1685	1684	1683	1682	1681	1680	1679	1678	1677	1676	1675	1674	1673	1672	1671	1670	1669	1668	1667	1666	1665	1664	1663	1662	1661	1660	1659	1658	1657	1656	1655	1654	1653	1652	1651	1650	1649	1648	1647	1646	1645	1644	1643	1642	1641	1640	1639	1638	1637	1636	1635	1634	1633	1632	1631	1630	1629	1628	1627	1626	1625	1624	1623	1622	1621	1620	1619	1618	1617	1616	1615	1614	1613	1612	1611	1610	1609	1608	1607	1606	1605	1604	1603	1602	1601	1600	1599	1598	1597	1596	1595	1594	1593	1592	1591	1590	1589	1588	1587	1586	1585	1584	1583	1582	1581	1580	1579	1578	1577	1576	1575	1574	1573	1572	1571	1570	1569	1568	1567	1566	1565	1564	1563	1562	1561	1560	1559	1558	1557	1556	1555	1554	1553	1552	1551	1550	1549	1548	1547	1546	1545	1544	1543	1542	1541	1540	1539	1538	1537	1536	1535	1534	1533	1532	1531	1530	1529	1528	1527	1526	1525	1524	1523	1522	1521	1520	1519	1518	1517	1516	1515	1514	1513	1512	1511	1510	1509	1508	1507	1506	1505	1504	1503	1502	1501	1500	1499	1498	1497	1496	1495	1494	1493	1492	1491	1490	1489	1488	1487	1486	1485	1484	1483	1482	1481	1480	1479	1478	1477	1476	1475	1474	1473	1472	1471	1470	1469	1468	1467	1466	1465	1464	1463	1462	1461	1460	1459	1458	1457	1456	1455	1454	1453	1452	1451	1450	1449	1448	1447	1446	1445	1444	1443	1442	1441	1440	1439	1438	1437	1436	1435	1434	1433	1432	1431	1430	1429	1428	1427	1426	1425	1424	1423	1422	1421	1420	1419	1418	1417	1416	1415	1414	1413	1412	1411	1410	1409	1408	1407	1406	1405	1404	1403	1402	1401	1400	1399	1398	1397	1396	1395	1394	1393	1392	1391	1390	1389	1388	1387	1386	1385	1384	1383	1382	1381	1380	1379	1378	1377	1376	1375	1374	1373	1372	1371	1370	1369	1368	1367	1366	1365	1364	1363	1362	1361	1360	1359	1358	1357	1356	1355	1354	1353	1352	1351	1350	1349	1348	1347	1346	1345	1344	1343	1342	1341	1340	1339	1338	1337	1336	1335	1334	1333	1332	1331	1330	1329	1328	1327	1326	1325	1324	1323	1322	1321	1320	1319	1318	1317	1316	1315	1314	1313	1312	1311	1310	1309	1308	1307	1306	1305	1304	1303	1302	1301	1300	1299	1298	1297	1296	1295	1294	1293	1292	1291	1290	1289	1288	1287	1286	1285	1284	1283	1282	1281	1280	1279	1278	1277	1276	1275	1274	1273	1272	1271	1270	1269	1268	1267	1266	1265	1264	1263	1262	1261	1260	1259	1258	1257	1256	1255	1254	1253	1252	1251	1250	1249	1248	1247	1246	1245	1244	1243	1242	1241	1240	1239	1238	1237	1236	1235	1234	1233	1232	1231	1230	1229	1228	1227	1226	1225	1224	1223	1222	1221	1220	1219	1218	1217	1216	1215	1214	1213	1212	1211	1210	1209	1208	1207	1206	1205	1204	1203	1202	1201	1200	1199	1198	1197	1196	1195	1194	1193	1192	1191	1190	1189	1188	1187	1186	1185	1184	1183	1182	1181	1180	1179	1178	1177	1176	1175	1174	1173	1172	1171	1170	1169	1168	1167	1166	1165	1164	1163	1162	1161	1160	1159	1158	1157	1156	1155	1154	1153	1152	1151	1150	1149	1148	1147	1146	1145	1144	1143	1142	1141	1140	1139	1138	1137	1136	1135	1134	1133	1132	1131	1130	1129	1128	1127	1126	1125	1124	1123	1122	1121	1120	1119	1118	1117	1116	1115	1114	1113	1112	1111	1110	1109	1108	1107	1106	1105	1104	1103	1102	1101	1100	1099	1098	1097	1096	1095	1094	1093	1092	1091	1090	1089	1088	1087	1086	1085	1084	1083	1082	1081	1080	1079	1078	1077	1076	1075	1074	1073	1072	1071	1070	1069	1068	1067	1066	1065	1064	1063	1062	1061	1060	1059	1058	1057	1056	1055	1054	1053	1052	1051	1050	1049	1048	1047	1046	1045	1044	1043	1042	1041	1040	1039	1038	1037	1036	1035	1034	1033	1032	1031	1030	1029	1028	1027	1026	1025	1024	1023	1022	1021	1020	1019	1018	1017	1016	1015	1014	1013	1012	1011	1010	1009	1008	1007	1006	1005	1004	1003	1002	1001	1000	999	998	997	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**AUTHORISED
UNIT TRUSTS**

● FT Cityline Unit Trust Prices are available over the telephone. Call the FT Cityline Help Desk on (877) 878-4378 for more details.

[illegible]

Guide to pricing of Authorised Unit Trusts

INITIAL CHARGE: Charge made on sale of unit. Used to defray marketing and administrative costs, including commission paid

OFFER PRICE: Also called *issue price*. The price at which units are bought by investors.

CANCELLATION PRICE: The minimum redemption price. The maximum spread between

the offer and bid prices is determined by a formula laid down by the government. In practice, most unit trust managers quote a much narrower spread. As a result, the bid price is often set above the cancellation price. However,

TIME: The time shown describes the time

average: 6 years is the time of the last trust's valuation point unless another time is indicated by the symbol alongside the individual unit trust name. The symbols are as follows: (9) - 0001 to 1100 hours; (8) - 1101 to 1400 hours; (+) -

Daily dealing prices are set on the basis of the valuation point; a short period of three day elapses before prices become available.

HISTORIC PRICING: The letter H declares that the surgeons will normally deal 10% off the rates set on the small amount of insurance.

prices shown are the latest available before publication and may not be the current trading levels because of an interesting portfolio revaluation or a switch to a forward pricing basis. The consensus must deal at a forward

FORWARD PRICING: The letter F denotes that the managers deal at line price to be set on the next submission. Submission expires at 11:59 p.m. on the day of the auction.

prices in advance of the purchase or sale being carried out. The prices appearing in the newspaper are the most recent provided by the shippers.

REPORTS: The most recent report and scheme particulars can be obtained free of charge from fund managers.

Other explanatory notes are contained in the last column of the FT Managed Funds Service.

Centre Point,
703 New Oxford Street, London WC1A 20H
Tel: 071-379-0444.

Net Cash Acq.	5	187.7	181.1	392.2	+2.6%
Net Cash Paid Acq. (10-0)	5	211.9	311.9	394.8	+0.8%
Net Cash Paid Acq. (10-0)	5	481.7	481.7	589.7	+1.4%
Dividends Rec.	5	120.0	120.0	127.0	+0.6%
Dividends Acq.	0	122.5	122.5	128.0	+0.4%
Dividends Paid (10-0)	0	219.9	311.5	394.0	+0.8%

[illegible]

... ..	64.15	64.15	64.21	64.26
... ..	78.43	78.71	64.88	64.93
... ..	108.88	121.71	121.88	121.93

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Auto Sales Corp.	77.24	77.24	82.77	82.77
Auto Sales Corp.	48.88	48.88	87.85	87.85
Auto Sales Corp.	72.61	72.61	74.9	74.9
Auto Sales Corp.	222.1	222.1	216.6	216.6
Auto Sales Corp.	54.74	54.74	87.85	87.85
Auto Sales Corp.	83.22	83.22	74.9	74.9

17 Ann Co Japan Plc	5%	12,478	21,840	2200.0	-
Shewart Ivory Dalt Tst Mgrs Ltd	(1200F)	2,478	2,488	2,483	-
48 Concrete St, Edinburgh					
American T	6	205.5	308.4	302.4	-1
Procter & Gamble	6	205.5	308.4	302.4	-1

Spokane Valley	1027.7	1027.7	1027.3	-0.4
Evergreen Interlake	1026.5	1026.5	7941.6	-0.0
Spokane Valley	164.4	135.1	102.2	+0.0
Spokane Valley	184.7	185.4	195.5	+0.0
Spokane Valley	471.5	471.9	501.4	+0.4
Spokane Valley	522.0	522.0	522.4	+0.4

1982	148.2	148.2	+1
1983	147.4	147.4	+1
1984	411.1	411.1	+2
1985	438.4	438.4	+3
1986	286.7	286.7	+1
1987	282.2	282.2	+1
1988	282.2	282.2	+1

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Equity	\$	100.0	97.2	98.6
North America	\$	127.1	127.1	126.6
Far East	\$	100.0	-	+0

Germany	6	53.85	52.06	07.58	+0.1
Spain	6	38.04	38.04	704.8	+0.0
Italy	6	34.79	35.00	102.2	+0.0
France	6	33.82	33.82	92.34	+0.0
UK Lending Cost	6	32.19	32.35	92.67	-0.2

Stock Life of Canada Unit Mgrs Ltd (TSE:CMU)		70.00	
American Growth	28.00	28.00	28.00
Strategic Assets	73.00	73.00	73.00
Life Insurance	73.00	73.00	73.00

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10-10-1964

1. The first step is to identify the problem or question that needs to be answered. This involves understanding the context and the specific requirements of the task.

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MARKETS REPORT

D-Mark edges lower

The D-Mark rose in early dealings as hopes that the Bundesbank might cut interest rates this week faded, writes *Conner Middlemarsh*.

However, it slipped to close slightly weaker against the US dollar and some European currencies.

The D-Mark received an early lift from a report in the German daily *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* that the Bundesbank's central bank council is not planning to cut official interest rates on Thursday - its last meeting of the year.

Citing an unnamed central bank source, the paper said the Bundesbank had made clear by setting securities repurchase agreements at a fixed rate of 8 per cent until January 5 that there would be no more interest rate cuts before year-end. There has been some speculation that the Bundesbank may lower its 5.75 per cent discount rate and 6.75 per cent Lombard rate at the meeting.

Bundesbank President Hans Tietmeyer said last week that the policy-making body would discuss the 1994 M3 money supply growth target at this week's meeting. He also said that next year's M3 target is likely to be close to this year's 4.5-4.6 per cent range. According to a poll of private economists conducted by Reuters, the Bundesbank is widely expected to set an unchanged or slightly lower target.

The German overnight rate tightened slightly amid the outflow of monthly tax payments. Call money was changing hands at around 6.10 per cent, up from around 6.05 per cent on Friday.

The March three-month Eurobank interest-rate contract on LIFFE eased by 0.05 point to 94.53 on strong volume on fading hopes for a rate cut this week.

The dollar traded around DM1.6050 early in the day, but dollar strengthened on late short-covering to a high of DM1.7055. It ended at DM1.7050, up from DM1.6990 at Friday's close. Most traders expect the dollar to remain in a relatively narrow trading range between DM1.69 and DM1.73 until year-end.

Dollar

Against the D-Mark (DM per \$)



Source: FT Graphix

■ Pound in New York
Dec 13 - Last - Fri close -
Spot 1.4000 1.4045
1m 1.3988 1.4015
3m 1.4021 1.4071
1y 1.4718 1.4758

● The D-Mark also weakened against the French franc, although traders reported few flows and said volume was thin.

The French franc strengthened within its former narrow ERM fluctuation band against the D-Mark to a high of FF4.421, before closing at FF4.422, up from FF4.424 on Friday.

The Bank of France left its 5.20 per cent intervention rate unchanged at its latest open-market operation, injecting FF9.8bn of liquidity into the money market.

The Belgian franc closed at BFR20.94 to the D-Mark, down from BFR20.91 on Friday. The Danish krone ended at DKR2.923, down from DKR2.913 on Friday. The Italian lira weakened in volatile trade to L1989.4 to the D-Mark from L1988.3 at Friday's close.

● The pound firmed against the D-Mark but lost some ground to the dollar. It closed at DM2.5425, up from DM2.5400 on Friday. Against the dollar, sterling ended at \$1.4905, down from \$1.4950.

The latest UK price data, indicating continued low inflation pressures, rekindled hopes of further interest rate cuts but did little to weaken the pound. Industrial output in October rose 0.7 per cent while manufacturing output was up 0.1 per cent, largely in line with market expectations.

The short sterling futures contract reflected continued expectations of another near-term base rate cut.

The March contract rose 0.04 point to 94.95 while the December contract, which expires on Wednesday, was unchanged at 94.64.

Traders are eyeing tomorrow's release of the November retail price index and November retail sales data for further clues on the inflation picture and the outlook for UK interest rates.

There's a feeling Wednesday could be (the Bank of England's) window of opportunity, if the numbers are good," said a London money dealer.

The market median forecast for RPI (ex-mortgage interest payments) is for an unchanged 2.8 per cent year-on-year. Retail sales are expected to have increased by 0.2 per cent on the month and by 3.6 per cent on the year.

The sterling money market was relatively tight, traders said. The Bank of England forecast a shortage of around £1.65bn in the morning and in early operations purchased bills totalling £1bn for resale to the market on January 4 at an interest rate of 5.8 per cent. In further operations, the Bank bought bills totalling £222m at 5 per cent, followed by £42m of bills at the same rate in the afternoon. It provided late assistance of around £400m.

● The Japanese yen was little changed against the dollar, but observers said it is likely to continue its weakening trend against the dollar in coming months. It ended at ¥108.95 against the US dollar, down from ¥109.15 on Friday.

With the Japanese economy all but ground to a halt, Mr Tony Baron, chief strategist at PaineWebber in London is calling for continued sharp interest rate cuts by the Bank of Japan to stimulate growth. He expects the 1.75 per cent official discount rate to be cut to at least 1 per cent, if not lower.

Moreover, as the US economy picks up and the Federal Reserve shifts towards a tightening bias, he expects the yen to drop to ¥112 by the end of January and as low as ¥125 by the end of 1994.

POUND SPOT FORWARD AGAINST THE POUND

Dec 13	Closing mid-point	Change on day	Bid/offer spread	Day's high/low	One month Rate	Three months Rate	One year Rate	Bank of Eng. Index			
Europe	17.65	-0.05	780-790	17.60-17.70	17.6000	-0.7	17.6737	-0.5	114.5		
Austria	(Sch)	17.65	-0.05	780-790	17.6000	-0.7	17.6737	-0.5	114.5		
Belgium	(Bfr)	53.25	+0.15	320-330	53.30	53.35	-2.4	53.48	-1.2	115.3	
Denmark	(DKr)	9.9750	-0.0075	700-800	9.9900	9.9900	9.9948	-2.4	10.1022	-1.3	79.7
France	(Ffr)	16.50	-0.015	975-1075	16.50	16.50	16.50	-1.3	16.5737	-0.8	100.3
Germany	(DM)	2.5425	-0.0025	400-450	2.5450	2.5475	2.5443	-0.8	2.5487	-0.3	124.0
Greece	(Dr)	384.35	+1.35	385-475	384.75	382.25	1.0227	-0.8	1.054	-0.8	102.1
Italy	(L)	1.9520	-0.0120	510-550	1.9520	1.9520	1.9520	-2.2	1.9530	-0.2	75.8
Japan	(Y)	251.80	-0.20	250-260	251.40	249.10	252.22	-0.2	252.05	-0.2	119.2
Luxembourg	(Lfr)	33.25	+0.15	320-330	33.30	33.35	-2.4	33.48	-1.2	115.3	
Netherlands	(Gld)	2.8800	-0.0075	450-550	2.8800	2.8800	2.8800	-0.2	2.8800	-0.2	65.9
Norway	(Nkr)	11.0000	-0.0075	250-350	11.0250	11.0250	-0.7	11.04	-0.4	110.0	
Portugal	(Esc)	203.70	-0.4	200-220	203.70	203.70	203.70	-1.1	203.70	-1.1	115.5
Spain	(Pta)	166.24	-0.7	165-166	166.24	166.24	166.24	-2.2	166.24	-2.2	61.6
Sweden	(Skr)	12.6428	-0.0075	375-475	12.6428	12.6428	12.6428	-1.1	12.6428	-1.1	115.5
Switzerland	(Sfr)	2.1800	-0.0075	800-900	2.1800	2.1800	2.1800	-1.1	2.1800	-1.1	115.5
UK	(£)	1.3190	-0.001	175-186	1.3190	1.3190	1.3190	-1.1	1.3190	-1.1	115.5
USA	(\$)	1.4905	-0.005	300-310	1.4905	1.4905	1.4905	-1.1	1.4905	-1.1	115.5
USA (New York)	(\$)	1.4905	-0.005	300-310	1.4905	1.4905	1.4905	-1.1	1.4905	-1.1	115.5
USA (Chicago)	(\$)	1.4905	-0.005	300-310	1.4905	1.4905	1.4905	-1.1	1.4905	-1.1	115.5
USA (San Francisco)	(\$)	1.4905	-0.005	300-310	1.4905	1.4905	1.4905	-1.1	1.4905	-1.1	115.5
USA (Los Angeles)	(\$)	1.4905	-0.005	300-310	1.4905	1.4905	1.4905	-1.1	1.4905	-1.1	115.5
USA (Miami)	(\$)	1.4905	-0.005	300-310	1.4905	1.4905	1.4905	-1.1	1.4905	-1.1	115.5
USA (Houston)	(\$)	1.4905	-0.005	300-310	1.4905	1.4905	1.4905	-1.1	1.4905	-1.1	115.5
USA (Dallas)	(\$)	1.4905	-0.005	300-310	1.4905	1.4905	1.4905	-1.1	1.4905	-1.1	115.5
USA (Phoenix)	(\$)	1.4905	-0.005	300-310	1.4905	1.4905	1.4905	-1.1	1.4905	-1.1	115.5
USA (San Diego)	(\$)	1.4905	-0.005	300-310	1.4905	1.4905	1.4905	-1.1	1.4905	-1.1	115.5
USA (Seattle)	(\$)	1.4905	-0.005	300-310	1.4905	1.4905	1.4905	-1.1	1.4905	-1.1	115.5
USA (Portland)	(\$)	1.4905	-0.005	300-310	1.4905	1.4905	1.4905	-1.1	1.4905	-1.1	115.5
USA (Tacoma)	(\$)	1.4905	-0.005	300-310	1.4905	1.4905	1.4905	-1.1	1.4905	-1.1	115.5
USA (Vancouver)	(\$)	1.4905	-0.005	300-310	1.4905	1.4905	1.4905	-1.1	1.4905	-1.1	115.5
USA (Calgary)	(\$)	1.4905	-0.005	300-310	1.4905	1.4905	1.4905	-1.1	1.4905	-1.1	115.5
USA (Edmonton)	(\$)	1.4905	-0.005	300-310	1.4905	1.4905	1.4905	-1.1	1.4905	-1.1	115.5
USA (Winnipeg)	(\$)	1.4905	-0.005	300-310	1.4905	1.4905	1.4905	-1.1	1.4905	-1.1	115.5
USA (Regina)	(\$)	1.4905	-0.005	300-310	1.4905	1.4905	1.4905	-1.1	1.4905	-1.1	115.5
USA (Saskatoon)	(\$)	1.4905	-0.005	300-310	1.4905	1.4905	1.4905	-1.1	1.4905	-1.1	115.5
USA (Weyburn)	(\$)	1.4905	-0.005	300-310	1.4905	1.4905	1.4905	-1.1	1.4905	-1.1	115.5
USA (Moose Jaw)	(\$)	1.4905	-0.005	300-310	1.4905	1.4905	1.4905	-1.1	1.4905	-1.1	115.5
USA (Swift Current)	(\$)	1.4905	-0.005	300-310	1.4905	1.4905	1.4905	-1.1	1.4905	-1.1	115.5
USA (Yorkton)	(\$)	1.4905	-0.005	300-310	1.4905	1.4905	1.4905	-1.1	1.4905	-1.1	115.5
USA (North Battleford)	(\$)	1.4905	-0.005	300-310	1.4905	1.4905	1.4905	-1.1	1.4905	-1.1	115.5
USA (Regina)	(\$)	1.4905	-0.005	300-310	1.4905	1.4905	1.4905	-1.1	1.4905	-1.1	115.5
USA (Saskatoon)	(\$)	1.4905	-0.005	300-310	1.4905	1.4905	1.4905	-1.1	1.4905	-1.1	115.5
USA (Weyburn)	(\$)	1.4905	-0.005	300-310	1.4905	1.4905	1.4905	-1.1	1.4905	-1.1	115.5
USA (Moose Jaw)	(\$)	1.4905	-0.005	300-310	1.4905	1.4905	1.4905	-1.1	1.4905	-1.1	115.5
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USA (Yorkton)	(\$)	1.4905	-0.005	300-310	1.4905	1.4905	1.4905	-1.1	1.4905	-1.1	115.5
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USA (Saskatoon)	(\$)	1.4905	-0.005	300-310	1.4905	1.4905	1.4905	-1.1	1.4905	-1.1	115.5
USA (Weyburn)	(\$)	1.4905	-0.005	300-310	1.4905	1.4905	1.4905	-1.1	1.4905	-1.1	115.5
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USA (Swift Current)	(\$)	1.4905	-0.005	300-310	1.4905	1.4905	1.4905	-1.1	1.4905	-1.1	115.5
USA (Yorkton)	(\$)	1.4905	-0.005	300-310	1.4905	1.4905	1.4905	-1.1	1.4905	-1.1	115.5
USA (North Battleford)	(\$)	1.4905	-0.005	300-310	1.4905	1.4905	1.4905	-1.1	1.4905	-1.1	115.5
USA (Regina)	(\$)	1.4905	-0.005	300-310	1.4905	1.4905	1.4905	-1.1	1.4905	-1.1	115.5
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USA (Swift Current)	(\$)	1.4905	-0.005	300-310	1.4905	1.4905	1.4905	-1.1	1.4905	-1.1	115.5
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USA (Regina)	(\$)	1.4905	-0.005	300-310	1.4905	1.4905	1.4905	-1.1	1.4905	-1.1	115.5
USA (Saskatoon)	(\$)	1.4905	-0.005	300-310	1.4905	1.4905	1.4905	-1.1	1.4905	-1.1	115.5
USA (Weyburn)	(\$)	1.4905	-0.005	300-310	1.49						

43

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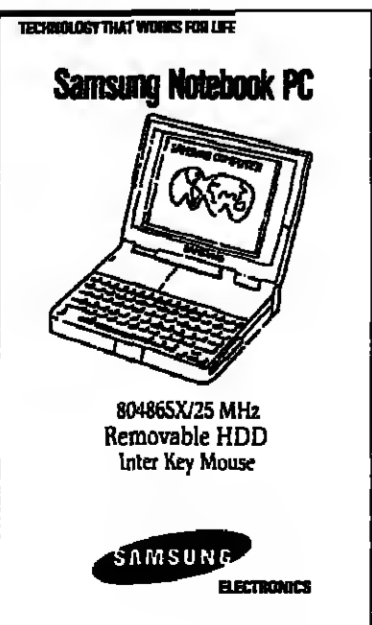
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NYSE COMPOSITE PRICES

Rank	Law School	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035	2036	2037	2038	2039	2040	2041	2042	2043	2044	2045	2046	2047	2048	2049	2050	2051	2052	2053	2054	2055	2056	2057	2058	2059	2060	2061	2062	2063	2064	2065	2066	2067	2068	2069	2070	2071	2072	2073	2074	2075	2076	2077	2078	2079	2080	2081	2082	2083	2084	2085	2086	2087	2088	2089	2090	2091	2092	2093	2094	2095	2096	2097	2098	2099	2100	2101	2102	2103	2104	2105	2106	2107	2108	2109	2110	2111	2112	2113	2114	2115	2116	2117	2118	2119	2120	2121	2122	2123	2124	2125	2126	2127	2128	2129	2130	2131	2132	2133	2134	2135	2136	2137	2138	2139	2140	2141	2142	2143	2144	2145	2146	2147	2148	2149	2150	2151	2152	2153	2154	2155	2156	2157	2158	2159	2160	2161	2162	2163	2164	2165	2166	2167	2168	2169	2170	2171	2172	2173	2174	2175	2176	2177	2178	2179	2180	2181	2182	2183	2184	2185	2186	2187	2188	2189	2190	2191	2192	2193	2194	2195	2196	2197	2198	2199	2200	2201	2202	2203	2204	2205	2206	2207	2208	2209	2210	2211	2212	2213	2214	2215	2216	2217	2218	2219	2220	2221	2222	2223	2224	2225	2226	2227	2228	2229	2230	2231	2232	2233	2234	2235	2236	2237	2238	2239	2240	2241	2242	2243	2244	2245	2246	2247	2248	2249	2250	2251	2252	2253	2254	2255	2256	2257	2258	2259	2260	2261	2262	2263	2264	2265	2266	2267	2268	2269	2270	2271	2272	2273	2274	2275	2276	2277	2278	2279	2280	2281	2282	2283	2284	2285	2286	2287	2288	2289	2290	2291	2292	2293	2294	2295	2296	2297	2298	2299	2300	2301	2302	2303	2304	2305	2306	2307	2308	2309	2310	2311	2312	2313	2314	2315	2316	2317	2318	2319	2320	2321	2322	2323	2324	2325	2326	2327	2328	2329	2330	2331	2332	2333	2334	2335	2336	2337	2338	2339	2340	2341	2342	2343	2344	2345	2346	2347	2348	2349	2350	2351	2352	2353	2354	2355	2356	2357	2358	2359	2360	2361	2362	2363	2364	2365	2366	2367	2368	2369	2370	2371	2372	2373	2374	2375	2376	2377	2378	2379	2380	2381	2382	2383	2384	2385	2386	2387	2388	2389	2390
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NASDAQ NATIONAL MARKET[illegible]**AMEX COMPOSITE PRICES** 4 pm close December 7:

Stock	DIV.	E	P/E	High	Low	Close	Change	Stock	DIV.	E	P/E	High	Low	Close	Change	Stock	DIV.	E	P/E	High	Low	Close	Change	Stock	DIV.	E	P/E	High	Low	Close	Change
Acton Corp.	1	25	16					Champion	24	405	19.4	165	143			Eastman	1	10	10					GenCorp	1	10	10				
Adco	0.20	116	14.6	135	134			Chubb	0.01	24	683	20	14			Eastman	1	10	10					GenCorp	1	10	10				
Alpha Int.	0.20	116	14.6	135	134			Chubb	0.01	24	683	20	14			Eastman	1	10	10					GenCorp	1	10	10				
Alpha Int.	0.20	116	14.6	135	134			Chubb	0.01	24	683	20	14			Eastman	1	10	10					GenCorp	1	10	10				
Alpha Int.	0.20	116	14.6	135	134			Chubb	0.01	24	683	20	14			Eastman	1	10	10					GenCorp	1	10	10				
Alpha Int.	0.20	116	14.6	135	134			Chubb	0.01	24	683	20	14			Eastman	1	10	10					GenCorp	1	10	10				
Alpha Int.	0.20	116	14.6	135	134			Chubb	0.01	24	683	20	14			Eastman	1	10	10					GenCorp	1	10	10				
Alpha Int.	0.20	116	14.6	135	134			Chubb	0.01	24	683	20	14			Eastman	1	10	10					GenCorp	1	10	10				
Alpha Int.	0.20	116	14.6	135	134			Chubb	0.01	24	683	20	14			Eastman	1	10	10					GenCorp	1	10	10				
Alpha Int.	0.20	116	14.6	135	134			Chubb	0.01	24	683	20	14			Eastman	1	10	10					GenCorp	1	10	10				
Alpha Int.	0.20	116	14.6	135	134			Chubb	0.01	24	683	20	14			Eastman	1	10	10					GenCorp	1	10	10				
Alpha Int.	0.20	116	14.6	135	134			Chubb	0.01	24	683	20	14			Eastman	1	10	10					GenCorp	1	10	10				
Alpha Int.	0.20	116	14.6	135	134			Chubb	0.01	24	683	20	14			Eastman	1	10	10					GenCorp	1	10	10				
Alpha Int.	0.20	116	14.6	135	134			Chubb	0.01	24	683	20	14			Eastman	1	10	10					GenCorp	1	10	10				
Alpha Int.	0.20	116	14.6	135	134			Chubb	0.01	24	683	20	14			Eastman	1	10	10					GenCorp	1	10	10				
Alpha Int.	0.20	116	14.6	135	134			Chubb	0.01	24	683	20	14			Eastman	1	10	10					GenCorp	1	10	10				
Alpha Int.	0.20	116	14.6	135	134			Chubb	0.01	24	683	20	14			Eastman	1	10	10					GenCorp	1	10	10				
Alpha Int.	0.20	116	14.6	135	134			Chubb	0.01	24	683	20	14			Eastman	1	10	10					GenCorp	1	10	10				
Alpha Int.	0.20	116	14.6	135	134			Chubb	0.01	24	683	20	14			Eastman	1	10	10					GenCorp	1	10	10				
Alpha Int.	0.20	116	14.6	135	134																										

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Perrier bottle ends with some chips

AMERICA

Gold's enliven dull picture at midday

Wall Street

In the absence of fresh news on the economy, US stocks followed a listless bond market to mostly lower levels yesterday morning, writes *Frank McGarry in New York*.

By 1 pm, the Dow Jones Industrial Average was down 1.39 at 3,799.28, and the more broadly based Standard & Poor's 500 was off 0.65 to 463.28. In the secondary markets, the American SE composite slipped 1.51 to 146.77, while the Nasdaq composite lost 2.43 to 768.31.

Activity on the NYSE was moderate, with 143m shares traded by 1 pm.

At the opening, investors found little to guide sentiment so turned to the US Treasury market, even though bond trading was quiet and generally directionless. By midday, the long end was posting moderate losses in reaction to higher gold prices and an early jump in the closely watched Commodity Research Bureau index.

The CRB index later changed course and slipped into negative territory. But the benchmark 30-year issue, which is most sensitive to signs of inflation, failed to recover and was trading 1/8% lower at 100 1/8 by midday.

With equities down slightly all morning, gold and other metal stocks were a rare bright spot. American Barrick rose 1/4% to \$23 1/2, Lac Minerals 1/4% to \$39, Homestake 1/4% to \$22 1/2, and Newmont Gold 1/4% to \$47.

Among non-ferrous metal producers, Phelps-Dodge gained 1/4% to \$49 1/2, Reynolds 1/4% to \$48 1/2, Alcoa 1/4% to \$73 1/2, and Cyprus Minerals 1/4% to \$25 1/2.

Near the top of the NYSE's most active list, IBM climbed 1 1/2% to \$56 1/2 on news of the sale of its Federal Systems division to Loral for \$1.5bn, or about 50 per cent more than initially expected. Loral added

\$1 1/2 to \$34 1/2.

In the banking sector, Bank America was down 1/4% to \$44 1/2, Chemical 1/4% to \$38 1/2, and Golden West Financial 1/4% to \$37 1/2. After Smith Barney Shearson removed the stocks from its "recommended" list.

US Surgical jumped 1 1/2% to \$22 1/2 after Smith Barney quoted the stock to "outperform" from "sell".

Nutmeg Industries surged 3 1/2% to \$17 1/2 on the announcement that VF Corp had agreed to acquire the company for \$17.50 a share. VF added 1/4% to \$4 1/2.

Southwest Airlines was mixed up 1 1/2% to \$25 1/2 after agreeing to acquire Morris Air. Other airline stocks failed to benefit from a further drop in crude oil futures. UAL slipped 1/4% to \$14 1/2, AMR edged 1/4% lower to \$8 1/2, and Alaska Air dropped 1/4% to \$14 1/2.

On the Nasdaq, ProCyte tumbled 1/4% to \$11 after suspending clinical trials of its lead product at the request of the Food and Drug Administration.

Canada

Toronto edged higher, led by golds and other mining stocks supported by hints of lower world aluminium output. The TSX 300 composite index gained 4.43 to 4,294.72 in volume of 30.9m shares. Advances led declines by 359 to 296 with 300 steady.

The gold index was up 137, or 1.3 per cent to 10,911.85 as Comex gold soared to four-month highs. Among gold stocks, Franco-Nevada rose 1/4% to \$29 1/2 and American Barrick climbed 1/4% to \$37 1/2.

SOUTH AFRICA

Johannesburg rose strongly on the back of a climbing bullion price. The gold index added 85 to 2,135, industrials 52 to 4,547. De Beers advanced 1/4% to \$199.25 and Anglo added 1/4% to \$192.50.

EUROPE

Frankfurt slips back after hitting all-time peak

Early gains on most senior bonds had disappeared by mid-afternoon yesterday, writes *Our Markets Staff*.

FRANKFURT rose to a new all-time high on short covering, the DAX index hitting an intraday 2,187.28, and lost the better part of its gains thereafter. The index closed 11.62 higher at 2,172.75 and shed most of that gain in the post-bourse, where the bid-indicated close was 2,163.82.

Mr Jens Wierckling of Merck Finck in Düsseldorf said that the market began to look uncomfortable at lunchtime when the DAX future, usually quoted at a premium to the cash market, was actually quoted at a discount for a while. "Many insurance companies had hedged their portfolios by selling futures rather than the cash market," said Mr Wierckling, "and then had to buy the futures back."

Turnover rose from DM9.1bn to DM9.4bn. Metallgesellschaft fell 1/4% to DM30, or 9.3 per cent to DM283 on its recent, poor results and liquidity problems associated with oil mar-

ket contracts. AEG fell another DM6 to DM169 after an earlier run-up on restructuring hopes.

Thyssen, strong late last week, put on DM5 to DM264.50 on a report that the group would consider pulling out of the steel business entirely, in order to protect the 60 per cent of its workforce in other areas; among the other risers, the chemicals, precious metals and pharmaceuticals group, Degussa, climbed DM10 to DM468 ahead of its preliminary results for 1993.

PARIS had a morning in positive territory, but ended with the CAC-40 index 1.82 lower at 2,196.31 after the EC Trade Commissioner, Sir Leon Brittan, said in the afternoon that some details of the GATT talks would have to be worked out after the December 15 deadline.

Turnover rose from FF3.54bn to FF3.9bn. Eurotunnel jumped by 6.3 per cent, rising FF2.65 to FF44.75 in heavy volume of 5.8m shares following the handover of the tunnel, said brokers, and acceptance by Transmanche Link of the principle of being

FT-SE Actuaries Share Indices

Dec 13	Dec 10	Dec 9	Dec 8	Dec 7	Dec 6
FT-SE 100	1421.09	1420.74	1420.76	1421.18	1420.28
FT-SE 250	1423.01	1423.44	1423.08	1423.29	1424.02
FT-SE 350	1423.01	1423.44	1423.08	1423.29	1424.02
FT-SE 450	1423.01	1423.44	1423.08	1423.29	1424.02
FT-SE 550	1423.01	1423.44	1423.08	1423.29	1424.02
FT-SE 650	1423.01	1423.44	1423.08	1423.29	1424.02
FT-SE 750	1423.01	1423.44	1423.08	1423.29	1424.02
FT-SE 850	1423.01	1423.44	1423.08	1423.29	1424.02
FT-SE 950	1423.01	1423.44	1423.08	1423.29	1424.02
FT-SE 1050	1423.01	1423.44	1423.08	1423.29	1424.02

paid in Eurotunnel shares. The defence and electronics group, Thomson-CSF, was up FF4.70 at FF159.70.

Elf Aquitaine, the oil company, fell FF2.50 to FF417.80. The chemicals and pharmaceuticals group, Rhône-Poulenc, fell FF2.60 to FF149.50 on an earnings downgrade by Goldman Sachs. After hours, its merger with Institut Marlex was postponed as the latter estimated the cost to prove its this year and next of withdrawing albumin products.

ZURICH stayed on the upgrade and set a new high, the SMI index adding 15.7 to 2,876.9 on the outlook for interest rates and corporate profits.

Alumina, a recent laggard, rose SF11 to a year's high of SF567 on strong demand from US firms which are turning their attention to cyclical chemicals and pharmaceuticals. A rise in aluminium prices was attributed to reports that Russia was considering a 10 per cent cut in production to reduce the current glut which has depressed world markets.

Swiss Reinsurance added SF10 to SF770 on the view that the shares had more upward potential once the current rights issue had been digested by the market.

AMSTERDAM drifted lower amid light futures-related selling, although the undertone remained firm. The CBS Ten-

dency index eased 0.1 to 139.9. Royal Dutch added 90 cents to F1196.70 on reports that the government would lift a 10-year ban on offshore gas and oil drilling in the environmentally sensitive Wadden Sea at a 100m conference after the market closed. The area contains 100bn-300bn cubic metres of natural gas and an unknown quantity of oil.

Unilever shed F12.60 to F1219.20: the recent high share price has prompted Goldman Sachs to remove it from its recommended list.

Van Ommen picked up F1.50 to F149.10 and Pakhoed F1.10 to F142.60: both fell sharply on Friday when the government announced it was moving its strategic oil reserves from Rotterdam Port to German salt caves.

MILAN resumed its advance, although shares were unable to maintain their best levels amid some late profit-taking ahead of tomorrow's end of the December account. The Comit index added 5.34 to 538.45.

Renewed enthusiasm for privatisation candidates helped

the market along. Sip added 1.65 or 1.9 per cent to L3,410 and Stet rose L105 or 2.7 per cent to L4,020.

Credito Italiano slid L30 to L2,350 on profit-taking after its strong gains last week when its share offer was heavily oversubscribed. Fiat added L111 to L4,276 as interest in the company's rights spread out to the ordinary shares. Rights not taken up from the recent issue are being traded on the market this week.

DUBLIN's ISEQ overall index picked up 15.70 to 1,838.83, the market driven by strong foreign demand for Smurfit. The paper and packaging group, a laggard early in the year, added another 7p to 122.95; it has risen from a low of 122.20 at the end of October in line with an improving paper sector on Wall Street.

STOCKHOLM's Affarsvärden index added 7.3 to 1,357.3, helped by a SKI2 rise in Ericsson "B" to SKI32 as foreign selling pressure eased.

Written and edited by William Cochrane and Michael Morgan.

ASIA PACIFIC

Pacific Basin climbs again with string of new highs

Tokyo

Investors refrained from trading due to mounting uncertainty over the stability of the seven-party coalition government, and the Nikkei average closed just marginally higher, writes *Emiko Terazono in Tokyo*.

Volume totalled a mere 210m shares, down sharply from Friday's 600m, the settlement day for December futures and options contracts. The 225-issue index gained 69.90 to 17,337.31 after a day of 17,123.81 and high of 17,563.36.

Advances outscored declines by 594 to 400, with 174 issues unchanged. The Topix index of all first section stocks put on 5.43 to 1,492.14, and in London the ISE/Nikkei 50 index firmed 11.09 to 1,201.52.

The Nikkei declined soon after the opening on arbitrage unwinding; it gained ground in

the early afternoon on a rise in the futures market, but late profit-taking eroded most of the advance. Traders said attention was focused on the negotiations within the coalition government over the partial lifting of Japan's rice import ban.

The Socialist party, which depends on the rural vote, has threatened to leave the coalition if the government decides to agree formally to the Gatt compromise plan, and some investors feared that the worst case scenario would be a break-up of the coalition.

Investors also awaited further details of the expected additional fiscal package to be floated in the press. The government is likely to release the details of the budget for the next business year starting March, along with a stimulatory fiscal package after Mr Morihiro Hosokawa, the prime minister, reaches a deo-

cision over the rice issue. Foreigners led buying in export oriented high-technology stocks. Sony rose Y140 to a year's high of Y5,940, as did Aiwa, up Y20 to Y1,940.

East Japan Railway gained Y5,000 at Y422,000 and Nippon Telegraph and Telephone added Y5,000 at Y735,000. Other telecommunications-related issues were also strong, with Fujitsu, the day's most active issue, climbing Y20 to Y855 and NEC advancing Y24 to Y904.

Brokers were easier on profit-taking, with Nomura Securities losing Y10 to Y1,840 and Nikko Securities declining Y20 to Y1,110.

Large retailers were strong on hopes of firm sales in the gift-giving season. Matsukoshi moved forward Y15 to Y865 and Tokai Department Store Y22 to Y800. However, supermarket chains lost ground, Daiichi shedding Y10 to Y1,430 and Ito-Yokado Y10 to Y5,570.

In Osaka, the OSE average was 68.01 firmer at 19,322.79 in volume of 79.7m shares.

Roundup

The region built on last week's gains, and produced six new record highs in the process.

HONG KONG added modestly to last week's outstanding rise, the Hang Seng index ending 20.48 higher at 10,248.59 in spite of a renewed Chinese broadcast against Governor Chris Patten's plans to push through his democratic reforms for the colony.

Turnover was estimated at HK\$9.23bn, still strong but down from Friday's record HK\$11.94bn. The most active blue chip, HSBC, advanced HK\$1 to HK\$65.50.

SINGAPORE's Straits Times Industrial index moved ahead 24.87 to end at a new closing peak of 2,945.27 for the third straight trading day on a

record turnover, driven by retail and institutional buying. Volume was a record 736.7m shares valued at \$81.60bn, against the previous high of 717.3m shares worth \$81.65bn set on October 28.

KUALA LUMPUR hit its new high on speculative and institutional buying, which took the KLCSE composite index up 14.50 to 1,090.25, volume rising from 754m to 938m shares.

MANILA's brokers, full of enthusiasm, said that equities were building up for a bull market in 1994. Yesterday's 65.92 gain to a new high of 2,579.21 left it more than doubled from the 1993 low of 1,270.68 on January 4.

KARACHI, continuing to put political stability ahead of a weak cotton crop, managed its record peak on settlement day, climbing sharply as local traders followed buying by foreign funds. The KSE index strengthened 30.69 to 1,888.24.

BOMBAY ended higher after an early retreat, lower prices triggering a fresh round of buying. The BSE index closed 22.51 up at 4,654.81 and brokers said foreign funds were still voraciously on feed.

TAIWAN made an eight-month high and turnover, too, jumped to its highest level since March. The weighted index put on 3.8 per cent, closing 178.23 stronger at 4,929.81. Turnover soared to T\$93.57bn, from T\$49.68bn in Saturday's shortened session. Foreign interest in financials boosted late buying across the board.

SEOUL, the prime exception, was dragged lower by profit-taking and institutional selling. The composite index finishing 16.85 down at 850.03. Securities houses face a government order requiring them to liquidate holdings beyond 60 per cent of their equity capital by the end of the year.

Hong Kong posts year's best rise

By Michael Morgan

Continued strong liquidity in a market rapidly becoming short of stock combined with technical factors to keep Hong Kong firmly on the upward escalator last week, recording the sharpest five-day advance for any market this year.

Miss Sara Dodd of HG Asia sees liquidity as the key to Hong Kong's 10 per cent rise last week, which took the cumulative gain over the last 12 months to more than 58 per cent as measured by the FT-Actuaries World Index in local currency terms.

Miss Dodd believes that political developments are having little effect on the market's direction, noting that further strong demand has been evident from the US and that there have been reports of some large purchases from Japan.

There have been stories, too, that local Hong Kong-Chinese investors have come to the conclusion that their earlier hopes of an easier market were little more than wishful thinking.

James Capel notes that the market became increasingly technical, with futures trading

reflecting options hedging. Capel believes that, in its present mood, the market could rise from the present 10,248 to 12,000, although because of the technical nature of trading it could also fall back from that level very quickly.

European markets produced a largely lacklustre performance, although Italy was an exception as the second round of local elections provided no unpleasant surprises and parliamentary passage of the budget looked to be back on track.

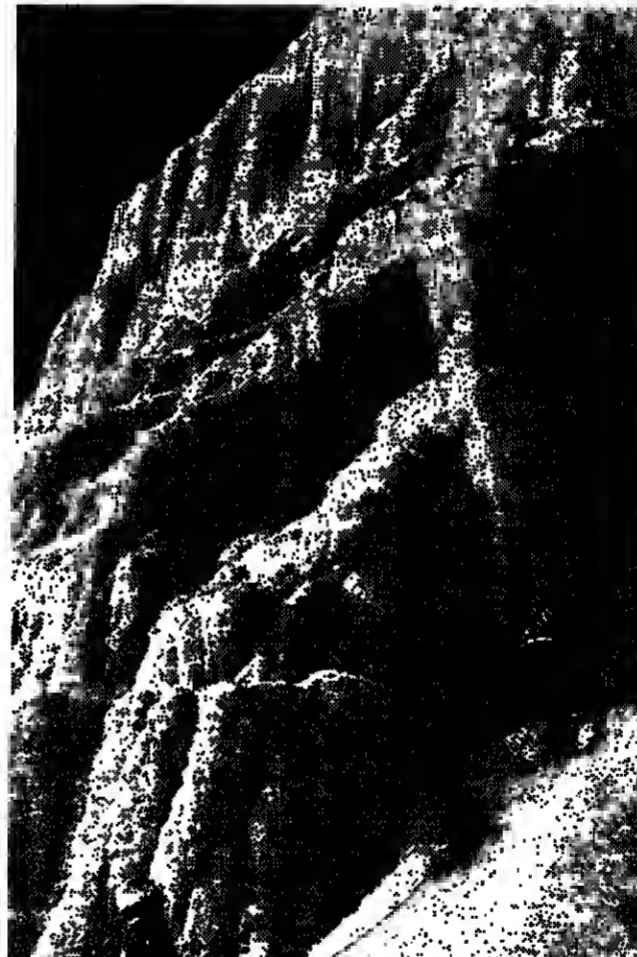
In a review of the Italian market for Oliver Kamm and Mr William Cowan of James Capel note that the final results of the local elections make the PDS the leading party in Italy and that, as such, it has to be taken seriously as a potential partner in any future government.

However, they believe the market has already discounted a worst case scenario of intensifying political instability.

They add that while the equity market has been depressed since August because of investor perceptions about political risk, as well as concern about the volume of rights issues and forthcoming privatisations, fundamental macroeconomic prospects are favourable

MARKETS IN PERSPECTIVE									
	% change in local currency	% change sterling	% change US \$		% change in local currency	% change sterling	% change US \$		% change in local currency
1 Week	4 Weeks	1 Year	Start of 1993	Start of 1992	1 Week	4 Weeks	1 Year	Start of 1993	Start of 1992
Austria	+1.19	+5.83	+40.88	+36.62	+31.55	+29.89			
Belgium	+0.81	+4.72	+29.36	+29.11	+22.29	+20.75			
Denmark	+1.25	+0.25	+34.48	+37.54	+31.48	+29.88			
Finland	+0.48	+0.53	+62.39	+52.99	+77.10	+77.10			
France	+0.85	+4.75	+27.99	+23.09	+18.39	+18.39			
Germany	+1.69	+6.46	+42.63	+39.00	+34.19	+32.50			
Ireland	+0.02	+0.82	+61.25	+51.08	+33.81	+32.13			
Italy	+6.45	+6.93	+47.58	+38.49	+23.38	+21.83			
Netherlands	+0.50	+3.09	+33.75	+35.21	+30.95	+28.30			
Norway	+2.37	+2.02	+61.67	+53.34	+28.70	+25.11			
Spain	+1.18	+2.11	+44.51	+43.56	+19.05	+18.45			
Sweden	+1.06	+3.86	+35.88	+33.24	+14.58	+13.13			
Switzerland	+1.27	+4.74	+45.42	+38.58	+41.21	+39.43			
UK	+0.79	+5.17	+21.45	+15.96	+15.96	+14.50			
EUROPE	+1.21	+4.60	+31.34	+28.71	+22.99	+21.25			
Australia	+1.87	+0.58	+34.29	+29.69	+26.03	+25.42			
Hong Kong	+10.01	+6.54	+88.29	+88.31	+91.18	+88.75			
Japan	+2.80	+6.69	+10.44	+12.26	+30.03	+28.40			
Malaysia	+6.42	+8.71	+86.07	+82.21	+109.69	+101.13			
New Zealand	+0.31	+4.18	+41.62	+38.77	+61.81	+49.90			
Singapore	+5.01	+7.34	+63.68	+54.29	+60.45	+58.44			
Canada	+0.67	+0.30	+23.28	+21.40	+17.63	+16.14			
USA	+0.17	+0.38	+6.50	+6.11	+7.46	+6.11			
Mexico	+6.15	+17.91	+36.68	+34.68	+36.72	+35.01			
South Africa	+5.86	+9.81	+44.15	+45.90	+62.66	+60.61			
WORLD INDEX	+0.63	+0.53	+16.40	+15.48	+20.29	+18.79			

ble over the next 12 months. The team says that following its sharp decline since August, the market offers reasonable rather than compelling valuations, trading on a multiple of 26 times 1993 earnings and 22 times for 1994.



Climbing together

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Div Midland Bank Plc

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FT-Actuaries WORLD INDICES																		
Jointly compiled by The Financial Times Ltd., Goldman, Sachs & Co. and NatWest Securities Ltd. In conjunction with the Institute of Actuaries and the Faculty of Actuaries																		
NATIONAL AND REGIONAL MARKETS																		
	US Dollar Index	Day's Change %	FRIDAY DECEMBER 10 1993					THURSDAY DECEMBER 9 1993					DOLLAR INDEX					
			Staying Index	Yes Index	DM Index	Yen Index	Currency Index	% chg on day	Gross Div. Yield	US Dollar Index	Staying Index	Yes Index	DM Index	Yen Index	Currency Index	1993 High	1992 Low	Year ago approx
Australia (99)	158.18	-0.8	156.86	158.14	136.72	156.82	-0.4	3.28	159.51	158.13	109.55	141.44	157.60	162.80	117.39	121.19	117.39	121.19
Austria (17)	162.06	-0.3	160.55	162.02	160.82	160.36	-0.9	0.99	162.92	161.38	125.66	162.33	161.92	164.47	131.18	137.68	131.18	137.68
Belgium (14)	152.54	-0.5	150.99	152.10	151.04	-0.1	4.08	160.40	159.02	115.29	115.29	115.29	115.29	115.29	115.29	115.29	115.29	115.29
Canada (107)	134.31	-0.5	133.20	132.66	118.63	128.25	-0.2	2.89	135.06	133.85	92.72	117.31	129.49	134.11	111.41	113.37	111.41	113.37
Denmark (32)	241.64	-0.2	239.63	241.62	213.44	218.47	-0.3	1.04	241.17	239.69	165.84	213.64	219.11	214.64	186.11	199.21	186.11	199.21
Finland (2)	123.58	-0.8	122.85	123.78	123.89	123.89	-1.5	1.71	124.43	123.89	109.55	141.44	157.60	162.80	117.39	121.19	117.39	121.19
France (98)	172.05	-0.4	170.82	171.70	151.96	157.00	-0.4	2.96	172.02	170.73	118.13	151.52	157.65	173.05	142.68	162.31	142.68	162.31
Germany (105)	137.85	-0.4	136.70	137.12	121.76	121.76	-0.9	1.70	138.36	137.17	95.22	126.68	122.68	138.36	101.50	102.66	101.50	102.66
Hong Kong (55)	418.20	-2.4	414.79	418.53	369.41	414.68	+2.4	2.63	408.39	404.87	240.48	392.13	403.93	410.92	218.82	209.93	218.82	209.93
Ireland (14)	179.41	+1.3	177.92	178.47	178.09	-1.0	1.18	177.06	175.53	145.86	178.31	179.28	179.28	179.28	179.28	179.28	179.28	179.28
Italy (70)	166.85	-0.2	165.29	165.12	59.04	83.62	-0.4	2.00	169.99	164.41	46.01	95.09	83.86	73.83	63.70	54.11	63.70	54.11
Japan (165)	134.96	-0.9	133.74	134.05	191.14	93.05	+1.3	0.88	133.78	132.63	91.88	118.64	81.88	165.81	107.05	107.29	107.05	107.29
Malaysia (16)	525.88	-0.9	521.52	522.82	504.46	516.77	+0.9	1.36	521.22	518.73	387.46	475.15	512.99	555.88	251.66	268.38	251.66	268.38
Mexico (18)	122.81	-0.1	122.64	122.81	122.81	122.81	-0.8	0.85	123.30	122.68	116.27	161.40	224.30	141.70	142.88	141.70	142.88	141.70
Netherlands (2)	224.81	-1.0	224.34	225.02	172.92	169.04	-0.1	3.12	195.17	193.49	134.01	173.92	169.29	197.07	159.37	154.55	159.37	154.55
New Zealand (14)	84.29	-0.3	83.76	84.26	58.79	61.49	-0.2	3.81	84.46	82.91	42.28	57.18	61.62	68.08	40.56	42.24	40.56	42.24
Norway (2)	172.05	-0.1	170.82	171.70	111.58	112.41	-0.1	0.85	172.15	170.87	116.27	145.86	178.31	179.28	141.70	142.88	141.70	142.88
Norway (2)	116.76	-0.3	116.14	116.07	172.92	169.04	-0.1	3.12	195.17	193.49	134.01	173.92	169.29	197.07	159.37	154.55	159.37	154.55
Portugal (2)	122.81	-0.1	122.64	122.81	122.81	122.81	-0.8	0.85	123.30	122.68	116.27	161.40	224.30	141.70	142.88	141.70	142.88	141.70
South Africa (93)	237.87	-0.3	236.69	241.10	229.28	-0.2	2.39	259.57	236.51	163.84	211.52	229.69	238.57	144.72	147.51	147.51	147.51	147.51
Spain (49)	138.12	-0.1	136.97	136.30	122.00	140.28	-0.1	4.11	137.82	136.73	98.72	132.99	145.50	145.24	115.23	117.94	115.23	117.94
Sweden (2)	187.29	-1.2	187.07	188.22	165.44	165.45	-0.9	1.51	189.52	187.68	130.16	159.52	252.84	208.96	141.70	142.88	141.70	142.88
Switzerland (60)	157.57	-0.1	156.98	156.72	139.20	142.28	-0.1	1.52	156.44	155.09	107.45	134.72	142.98	157.57	106.81	112.00	106.81	112.00
United Kingdom (215)	197.35	-0.2	195.71	196.15	174.31	195.71	-0.2	3.87	187.90	196.19	135.90	174.35	198.19	198.08	162.02	168.82	162.02	168.82
USA (19)	188.98	-0.1	187.41	133.39	166.80	188.98	-0.1	2.75	189.93	167.10	125.93	167.22	139.03	191.56	173.38	177.05	173.38	177.05
Australia (748)	166.05	-0.1	163.86	110.48	160.00	158.20	-0.3	2.87	165.22	163.80	113.48	146.51	157.61	165.22	132.92	134.53	132.92	134.53
Austria (114)	182.99	-0.7	181.47	126.26	181.64	193.27	-0.8	1.29	184.34	182.75	126.60	168.00	194.54	182.13	152.83	152.83	152.83	152.83
Belgium (713)	153.99	-0.1	152.71	136.42	136.01	125.27	-0.6	1.82	153.32	151.99	126.39	135.94	124.57	162.80	117.26	120.10	117.26	120.10
Canada-Pacific (43)	185.59	-0.1	184.02	120.03	126.94	164.87	-0.4	2.74	185.65	184.06	127.52	152.62	184.34	187.88	151.71	173.10	151.71	173.10
Europe Ex UK (533)	144.90	-0.1	143.96	98.76	127.91	136.14	-0.4	2.35	144.44	143.96	106.39	126.68	168.89	144.56	112.91	113.97	112.91	113.97
France (246)	175.82	-0.1	174.98	120.03	126.94	164.87	-0.4	2.74	175.09	174.98	106.39	126.68	168.89	144.56	112.91	113.97	112.91	113.97
Germany Ex UK (1649)	152.71	-0.4	154.43	107.45	137.66	128.33	-0.5	1.82	155.14	153.80	106.56	137.56	127.68	162.89	115.51	121.71	115.51	121.71
Hong Kong Ex UK (1952)	185.82	-0.1	181.46	112.34	143.63	145.21	-0.4	2.07	182.96	180.66	111.57	143.97	141.68	168.56	134.22	136.63	134.22	136.63
India (24)	185.82	-0.1	181.46	112.34	143.63	145.21	-0.4	2.07	182.96	180.66	111.57	143.97	141.68	168.56	134.22	136.63	134.22	136.63
Japan Ex UK (1887)	185.82	-0.1	181.46	112.34	143.63	145.21	-0.4	2.07	182.96	180.66	111.57	143.97	141.68	168.56	134.22	136.63	134.22	136.63
USA Ex UK (2167)	185.82	-0.1	181.46	112.34	143.63	145.21	-0.4	2.07	182.96	180.66	111.57	143.97	141.68	168.56	134.22	136.63	134.22	136.63
World Ex UK (1887)	185.82	-0.1	181.46	112.34	143.63	145.21	-0.4	2.07	182.96	180.66	111.57	143.97	141.68	168.56	134.22	136.63	134.22	136.63
World Index (2167)	185.82	-0.1	181.46	112.34	143.63	145.21	-0.4	2.07	182.96	180.66	111.57	143.97	141.68	168.56	134.22	136.63	134.22	136.63

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